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1905

The Heimskringla

A HISTORY OF

THE NORSE KINGS

BY

SNORRE STURLASON

DONE INTO ENGLISH OUT OF THE ICELANDIC

BY

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REVISED WITH NOTES BY

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VOL. III.

PUBLISHED BY THE

NORRŒNA SOCIETY,

LONDON COPENHAGEN STOCKHOLM BERLIN NEW YORK

1907

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LIST OF PHOTOGRAVURES.

(HEIMSKRINGLA)

VOL. III.

Frontispiece—A Norse Village of the Tenth Century.

Page

The Infancy of Harald, Foster-son of Edward the Good 803

Ottar Birting puts King Sigurd to Shame..... 909

The Viking's Bride 1017

21469

CONTENTS.

(Heimskringla)

VOL. III.

Page

Saga of Harald Hardrade (Continued).

King Magnus and Svein Ulfson 717
Levys made by the two Kings 718
Death of King Magnus the Good..... 720
The Funeral of King Magnus 721
Harald Sigurdson and Geysa's Daughter 723
Marriage of the Children of Harald Hardrade..... 724
Armaments of Harald and Svein Ulfson 725
Harald's Escape into the Jutland Sea 726
How Harald Ruled his Kingdom 729
Haldor Snorrason and Ulf Uspakson 730
Beginning of Hakon Ivarson's Story 731
Einar Tambaskelfer and Earl Orm 732
Quarrel Between Harald and Einar 733
The Fall of Einar and Eindride 734
King Harald and Fin Arnason 736
Fin Arnason's Journey 738
Courtship of Hakon Ivarson 739
Hakon's Journey to Denmark 740
The Murder of Asmund 741
Hakon Ivarson's Marriage 743
Fall of Kalf Arnason 744
Fin Arnason's Expedition 745
Guthorm's Junction with the Irish King Margad..... 746
A Miracle of King Olaf in Denmark..... 747
King Olaf Restores a Cripple 748
King Harald's Foray in Denmark 749
King Harald's Challenge 751
King Harald's Fleet 753
Beginning of the battle of Nis-river..... 755
Flight of King Svein 757
Fin Arnason is Granted Quarter..... 760

Page
Svein Rewards Karl the Bonde 762
Attempt to Capture Earl Hakon 763
Agreement Between Kings Harald and Svein.....765
Harald's Battle with Earl Hakon 767
Death of Hal, Murderer of Kodran 770
Harald Perpetrates Many Cruelties 771
Of the Kings of England 772
Of Harald Godwinson 773
Edward's Death, Godwinson becomes King of England.774
Earl Toste's Expedition to Denmark 775
Toste's Expedition to Norway 777
Gyrd's Dreams 779
Dreams of Thord and King Harald 780
Battle of Scarborough 781
Battle at the Humber 782
Capture of a Castle by Harald.....784
Of King Harald's Landing 785
Toste's Counsel and Harald Array.....786
The Army, and Magnificence of Harald 787
Beginning of the Battle with Sigurdson 789
The Fall of Harald Sigurdson.....790
The Skirmish of Orre 791
Styrker the Marshal 792
William the (Conqueror) Bastard 793
Fall of Harald Godwinson 793
Death of Earl Valthiof 794
Olaf Haraldson's Expedition to Norway 795
The Wisdom and Bravery of Harald Sigurdson.....797
King Harald and King Olaf Captured 798
Death of King Magnus 799

Saga of Olaf Kyrre.

Olaf's Personal Appearance 801
King Olaf's Manner of Living 802
Fashion and Arrangement of King Olaf's Court.....803
Death of King Svein Ulfson 804
More Miracles of King Olaf 804
Meeting of Olaf Kyrre and King Canute.....807
A Bonde who Understood the Language of Birds.....808
Death of King Olaf Kyrre 811

CONTENTS

Page

Saga of Magnus Barefoot.

Beginning of the Reign of Magnus 812
Death of King Hakon 813
Thorer of Steig Rebels Against Magnus 815
Adventures of Thorer of Steig 816
Death of Thorer and Egil 817
Punishment of the Throndhjem People 819
Bonde Sveinke and Sigurd Ulstreng 820
Magnus Plunders the people of the Hebudes 828
Fall of Earl Huge the Brave 829
Death of the Earls of Orkney 831
Quarrels of Kings Magnus and Inge 832
Inge Expels the People from Vener Lake District 833
King Magnus and Inge Battle at Foxerne 834
Meeting of the Kings at Gaut River 837
Marriage of King Magnus 838
Quarrel Between Magnus and Ogmundson 839
Celebrated Voyage of Ogmundson 841
Miracles of King Olaf, and War in Ireland 842
The Irish Ambush Magnus 843
Desperate Battle, and death of Magnus 845

Saga of Sigurd the Crusader.

Beginning of the Reign of the Sons of Magnus 848
King Sigurd's Journey 850
Capture of Lisbon 851
Battle on the Island Forminterra 852
Duke Roger made King of Sicily 854
King Sigurd's Expedition to Palestine 855
Capture of Sidon 856
Sigurd's Expedition to Constantinople 857
Sigurd Entertained by the Emperor of Constantinople 859
Acts of Eystein During Sigurd's Absence 861
Of Ivar Ingimundson 863
King Sigurd's Dream 866
King Sigurd's Marriage 869
Dispute with Sigurd Hranason in a Law Case 869
Birth of Magnus the Blind 875
Kings Sigurd and Eystein Compared 876
King Sigurd Seized with Madness 880

Page
Death of King Eystein 881
Baptizing the People of Smaland 881
Thorarin Stutfeld Composes Some Severe Satires....883
Of Sigurd and Ottar Birting 885
Of King Sigurd's Dream 888
Harald Gille Goes to Norway 891
A Race Between Magnus and Gille 892
King Sigurd's Swimming Feat 894
Boy Harald, and Svein Rimhildson 896
Cruelty of Thora Cured by a Miracle....897
A Tortured Prisoner Freed by a Miracle....898
Marriage of King Sigurd to Cecelia 901
Castle and Church Built by Sigurd 904
King Sigurd's Death 905

Saga of Magnus the Blind.

Magnus and Harald Gille Proclaimed King....906
Of the Forces of Magnus and Harald 908
Battle at Fyrileif 910
Death of Asbjorn and of Nereid 911
A Council Called by King Magnus....912
King Magnus Taken Prisoner 915
King Magnus Horribly Mutilated 916
Wonderful Omens in Konungahella 917
Beginning of War in Konungahella 918
A Desperate Battle with Vindland Heathens....920
Harald Gille and Bishop Magnus 926
Story of Sigurd Slembidjakn....928
Adventures of Sigurd in Iceland 930
Sigurd is Accused of Murder 931
Treachery Towards King Harald....933
Murder of King Harald 934

Saga of the Sons of Harald.

History of Kings Sigurd and Inge 936
Battles Fought by Magnus, Sigurd, and Inge....937
King Eirik's Expedition to Norway 940
Burning of the Town of Oslo....941
Sigurd Attacked by Tunsberg Men....942
The Murder of Beintein 943
Campaign of Sigurd Slembe 946

Page
King Inge's Letter to King Sigurd....947
Ottar Birting's Speech....948
Fall of Magnus the Blind....949
Sigurd Slembe Taken Prisoner....951
Fortitude of Sigurd Under Torture....953
Eystein Haraldson Goes to Norway....955
Murder of Ottar Birting....956
Journey of Erling Skakke and Ragnvald....957
Birth of Hakon Herdebred....959
War Expedition of King Haraldson....960
Of Harald's Sons....962
Habits and Manners of Harald's Sons....963
Cardinal Nikolas Sent by the Pope to Norway....964
Another Miracle of King Olaf....965
Horrible Mutilation of Priest Richard....967
Kings Inge and Sigurd Hold a Thing....969
Gregorius Incites an Attack Upon Sigurd....970
The Killing of Sigurd and Thord....972
Reconciliation Between Eystein and Inge....975
Death of King Eystein....977

Saga of Hakon the Broad-Shouldered.

Beginning of Hakon Herdebred....980
Defeat and Death of Hakon....981
Fall of Gyrd and Havard....983
Gregorius Counsels King Inge....984
Speech of Erling Skakke....985
Hakon Prepares his Fleet for Battle....986
Sigurd of Reyr Makes a Patriotic Exhortation....988
King Inge Prepares to Engage Hakon....989
Beginning of the Battle....991
Flight of King Hakon....992
A Conflict on the Piers....995
A Bloody Fight at Saurby Farm....997
The Death of Gregorius Dagson....998
King Inge Bewails the Death of Gregorius....1000
King Hakon Advances to Attack King Inge....1001
King Inge's Speech to his Men....1002
The Fall of King Inge....1003
King Hakon and Queen Kristin....1004

Page
Remarkable Story About Saint Olaf's Sword.....1005
Vision of Saint Olaf at the Head of the Varings.....1007

Saga of Magnus Erlingson.

Beginning of Erlingson 1009
King Magnus Goes to Denmark.....1011
Battle of Tunsberg 1012
Erling Secretly Prepares to Fight Hakon 1014
Sounding the War Horns for Battle.....1016
Defeat and Death of Hakon 1018
Flight of the Chiefs of Hakon's Men.....1020
Earl Sigurd's Condemnation 1021
Civil War in Viken District 1022
Erling Receives Report of Sigurd's Approach.....1023
Earl Sigurd's Battle Formation 1025
Earl Sigurd Slain, Refusing to Retreat.....1026
Markus of Skog, and Sigurd Sigurdson.....1027
The Killing of Markus and King Sigurd.....1029
Erling Kills Many Bondes who Refuse to Pay Mulct..1030
Erling Orders Two Men to be Drowned.....1032
Conference Between Erling and Eystein.....1032
Consecration of King Magnus 1035
King Valdemar Sends an Embassy to Magnus.....1036
Letters of the Throndhjem People 1038
Erling Severely Punishes Throndhjem People.....1039
Valdemar's Expedition to Norway.....1040
Erling's Expedition to Jutland 1041
Conference Between Erling and Valdemar 1043
Erling Advised of His Peril by a Dream.....1045
Battle at Rydiokul 1046
Eystein and the Birkebeins 1048
Character of Earl Erling 1050
Nikolas Refuses to be Warned by Eirik 1051
Nikolas is Surprised and Killed 1052
The Death of King Eystein 1053
Character of the Birkebeins.....1055

THE HEIMSKRINGLA.

VOL. III.

SAGA OF HARALD HARDRADE.

(CONTINUED.)

25.—OF KING MAGNUS.

The kings Magnus and Harald both ruled in Norway the winter after their agreement (1047), and each had his court. In winter they went around the Upland country in guest-quarters; and sometimes they were both together, sometimes each was for himself. They went all the way north to Throndhjem, to the town of Nidaros. King Magnus had taken special care of the holy remains of King Olaf after he came to the country; had the hair and nails clipped every twelve month, and kept himself the keys that opened the shrine. Many miracles were worked by King Olaf's holy remains. It was not long before there was a breach in the good understanding between the two kings, as many were so mischievous as to promote discord between them.

26.—OF SVEIN ULFSON.

Svein Ulfson remained behind in the harbour after

Harald had gone away, and inquired about his proceedings. When he heard at last of Magnus and Harald having agreed and joined their forces, he steered with his forces eastward along Scania, and remained there until towards winter, when he heard that King Magnus and King Harald had gone northwards to Norway. Then Svein, with his troops, came south to Denmark and took all the royal income that winter (1047).

27.—OF THE LEVY OF THE TWO KINGS.

Towards spring (1047) King Magnus and his relation, King Harald, ordered a levy in Norway. It happened once that the kings lay all night in the same harbour and next day, King Harald, being first ready, made sail. Towards evening he brought up in the harbour in which Magnus and his retinue had intended to pass the night. Harald laid his vessel in the royal ground, and there set up his tents. King Magnus got under sail later in the day and came into the harbour just as King Harald had done pitching his tents. They saw then that King Harald had taken up the king's ground and intended to lie there. After King Magnus had ordered the sails to be taken in, he said, "The men will now get ready along both sides of the vessel to lay out their oars, and some will open the hatches and bring up the arms and arm themselves; for, if they will not make way for us, we will fight them." Now when King Harald sees that King Magnus will give him battle, he says to his men, "Cut our land-fastenings and back the ship out of the ground, for friend Magnus is in a passion." They did so and laid the vessel out of the

ground and King Magnus laid his vessel in it. When they were now ready on both sides with their business, King Harald went with a few men on board of King Magnus's ship. King Magnus received him in a friendly way, and bade him welcome. King Harald answered, "I thought we were come among friends; but just now I was in doubt if ye would have it so. But it is a truth that childhood is hasty, and I will only consider it as a childish freak." Then said King Magnus, "It is no childish whim, but a trait of my family, that I never forget what I have given, or what I have not given. If this trifle had been settled against my will, there would soon have followed some other discord like it. In all particulars I will hold the agreement between us; but in the same way we will have all that belongs to us by that right." King Harald coolly replied, that it is an old custom for the wisest to give way; and returned to his ship. From such circumstances it was found difficult to preserve good understanding between the kings. King Magnus's men said he was in the right; but others, less wise, thought there was some slight put upon Harald in the business. King Harald's men, besides, insisted that the agreement was only that King Magnus should have the preference of the harbour-ground when they arrived together, but that King Harald was not bound to draw out of his place when he came first. They observed, also, that King Harald had conducted himself well and wisely in the matter. Those who viewed the business in the worst light insisted that King Magnus wanted to break the agreement, and that he had done King Harald injustice, and put an affront on him.

Such disputes were talked over so long among foolish people, that the spirit of disagreeing affected the kings themselves. Many other things also occurred, in which the kings appeared determined to have each his own way; but of these little will be set down here.

28.—KING MAGNUS THE GOOD'S DEATH.

The kings, Magnus and Harald, sailed with their fleet south to Denmark; and when Svein heard of their approach, he fled away east to Scania. Magnus and Harald remained in Denmark late in summer, and subdued the whole country. In autumn they were in Jutland. One night, as King Magnus lay in his bed, it appeared to him in a dream that he was in the same place as his father, Saint Olaf, and that he spoke to him thus: "Wilt thou choose, my son, to follow me, or to become a mighty king, and have long life; but to commit a crime which thou wilt never be able to expiate?" He thought he made the answer, "Do thou, father, choose for me." Then the king thought the answer was, "Thou shalt follow me." King Magnus told his men this dream. Soon after he fell sick and lay at a place called Sudathorp. When he was near his death he sent his brother, Thorer, with tokens to Svein Ulfson, with the request to give Thorer the aid he might require. In this message King Magnus also gave the Danish dominions to Svein after his death; and said it was just that Harald should rule over Norway and Svein over Denmark. Then King Magnus the Good died (1047), and great was the sorrow of all the people at his death. So says Od Kikinaskald:—

"The tears o'er good King Magnus' bier.
The people's tears, were all sincere:
Even they to whom he riches gave
Carried him heavily to the grave.

All hearts were struck at the king's end;
His house-thralls wept as for a friend;
His court-men oft alone would muse,
As pondering o'er unthought of news."

29.—KING MAGNUS'S FUNERAL.

After this event King Harald held a Thing of his men-at-arms, and told them his intention to go with the army to Viborg Thing, and make himself be proclaimed king over the whole Danish dominions, to which, he said, he had hereditary right after his relation Magnus, as well as to Norway. He therefore asked his men for their aid, and said he thought the Norway man should show himself always superior to the Dane. Then Einar Tambaskelfer replies that he considered it a greater duty to bring his foster-son King Magnus's corpse to the grave, and lay it beside his father, King Olaf's, north in Throndhjem town, than to be fighting abroad and taking another king's dominions and property. He ended his speech with saying that he would rather follow King Magnus dead than any other king alive. Thereupon he had the body adorned in the most careful way, so that most magnificent preparations were made in the king's ship. Then all the Throndhjem people and all the Northmen made themselves ready to return home with the king's body, and so the army was broken up. King Harald saw then that it was better for him to return to Norway to secure that kingdom first, and to assemble men anew; and so King Harald returned to Norway with all his army. As soon as he came to Norway he held a Thing with the people of the country, and

had himself proclaimed king everywhere. He proceeded thus from the East through Viken, and in every district in Norway he was named king. Einar Tambaskelfer, and with him all the Throndhjem troops, went with King Magnus's body and transported it to the town of Nidaros, where it was buried in St. Clement's church, where also was the shrine of King Olaf the Saint. King Magnus was of middle size, of long and clear-complexioned countenance, and light hair, spoke well and hastily, was brisk in his actions, and extremely generous. He was a great warrior, and remarkably bold in arms. He was the most popular of kings, prized even by enemies as well as friends.

30.—OF SVEIN ULFSON.

Svein Ulfson remained that autumn in Scania (1047), and was making ready to travel eastward to Sweden, with the intention of renouncing the title of king he had assumed in Denmark; but just as he was mounting his horse some men came riding to him with the first news that King Magnus was dead, and all the Northmen had left Denmark. Svein answered in haste, "I call God to witness that I shall never again fly from the Danish dominions as long as I live." Then he got on his horse and rode south into Scania, where immediately many people crowded to him. That winter he brought under his power all the Danish dominions, and all the Danes took him for their king. Thorer, King Magnus's brother, came to Svein in autumn with the message of King Magnus, as before related, and was well received; and Thorer remained long with Svein and was well taken care of.

31.—OF KING HARALD SIGURDSON.

King Harald Sigurdson took the royal power over all Norway after the death of King Magnus Olafson; and when he had reigned over Norway one winter and spring was come (1048), he ordered a levy through all the land of one-half of all men and ships and went south to Jutland. He herried and burned all summer wide around in the land and came into Godnarfjord, where King Harald made these verses:—

"While wives of husbands fondly dream,
Here let us anchor in the stream,
In Godnarfjord; we'll safely moor
Our sea-homes, and sleep quite secure."

Then he spoke to Thiodolf, the skald, and asked him to add to it what it wanted, and he sang:—

"In the next summer, I foresee,
Our anchorage in the South will be;
To hold our sea-homes on the ground,
More cold-tongued anchors will be found."

To this Bolverk alludes in his song also, that Harald went to Denmark the summer after King Magnus's death. Bolverk sings thus:—

"Next summer thou the levy raised,
And seawards all the people gazed,
Where thy sea-steeds in sunshine glancing
Over the waves were gaily prancing;
While the deep ships that plunder bore
Seemed black specks from the distant shore.
The Danes, from banks or hillocks green,
Looked with dismay upon the scene."

32.—OF THORKEL GEYSA'S DAUGHTERS.

Then they burned the house of Thorkel Geysa, who was a great lord, and his daughters they carried off bound to their ships. They had made a great mockery the winter before of King Harald's coming with war-ships against Denmark; and they cut their cheese into the shape of

anchors, and said such anchors might hold all the ships of the Norway king. Then this was composed:—

"The island-girls, we were told,
Made anchors all our fleet to hold:
Their Danish jest cut out in cheese
Did not our stern king's fancy please.
Now many a maiden fair, may be,
Sees iron anchors splash the sea,
Who will not wake a maid next morn
To laugh at Norway's ships in scorn."

It is said that a spy who had seen the fleet of King Harald said to Thorkel Geysa's daughters, "Ye said, Geysa's daughters, that King Harald dared not come to Denmark." Dotta, Thorkel's daughter, replied, "That was yesterday." Thorkel had to ransom his daughters with a great sum. So says Grane:—

"The gold-adorned girl's eye
Through Hornskog wood was never dry,
As down towards the sandy shore
The men their lovely prizes bore.
The Norway leader kept at bay
The foe who would contest the way,
And Dotta's father had to bring
Treasure to satisfy the king."

King Harald plundered in Denmark all that summer, and made immense booty; but he had not any footing in the land that summer in Denmark. He went to Norway again in autumn and remained there all winter (1049).

33.—MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN OF HARALD HARDRADE.

The winter after King Magnus the Good died, King Harald took Thora, daughter of Thorberg Arnason, and they had two sons; the oldest called Magnus, and the other Olaf. King Harald and Queen Ellisif had two daughters; the one Maria, the other Ingegerd. The spring after the foray which has just been related King Harald ordered the people out and went with them to Denmark (1049), and herried there, and did so summer after summer thereafter. So says Stuf, the skald:—

"Falster lay waste, as people tell,—
The raven in other isles fared well.
The Danes were everywhere in fear,
For the dread foray every year."

34.—OF THE ARMAMENTS OF SVEIN ULFSON AND HARALD.

King Svein ruled over all the Danish dominions after King Magnus's death. He sat quiet all the winter; but in summer he lay out in his ships with all his people and it was said he would go north to Norway with the Danish army and make not less havoc there than King Harald had made in Denmark. King Svein proposed to King Harald in winter (1049) to meet him the following summer at the Gaut river and fight until in the battle-field their differences were ended, or they were settled peacefully. They made ready on both sides all winter with their ships, and called out in summer one-half of all the fighting men. The same summer came Thorleik the Fair out of Iceland, and composed a poem about King Svein Ulfson. He heard, when he arrived in Norway, that King Harald had sailed south to the Gaut river against King Svein. Then Thorleik sang this:—

"The wily Svein, I think, will meet
These inland Norsemen fleet to fleet:
The arrow-storm, and heaving sea,
His vantage-fight and field will be.
God only knows the end of strife,
Or which shall have his land and life:
This strife must come to such an end,
For terms will never bind King Svein."

He also sang these verses:—

"Harald, whose red shield oft has shone
O'er herried coasts, and fields hard won,
Rides in hot wrath, and eager speeds
O'er the blue waves his ocean-steeds.
Svein, who in blood his arrows stains,
Brings o'er the ocean's heaving plains
His gold-beaked ships, which come in view
Out from the Sound with many a hue."

King Harald came with his forces to the appointed meeting-place; but there he heard that King Svein was

lying with his fleet at the south side of Seeland. Then King Harald divided his forces; let the greater part of the bonde-troops return home; and took with him his court-men, his lendermen, the best men-at-arms, and all the bonde-troops who lived nearest to the Danish land. They sailed over to Jutland to the south of Vendilskage, and so south to Thioda; and over all they carried fire and sword. So says Stuf, the skald:—

"In haste the men of Thyland fly
From the great monarch's threat'n-
ing eye:
At the stern Harald's angry look
The boldest hearts in Denmark
shook."

They went forward all the way south to Heidaby, took the merchant town and burnt it. Then one of Harald's men made the following verses:—

"All Heidaby is burned down!
Strangers will ask where stood the
town.
In our wild humour up it blazed,
And Svein looks round him all
amazed.
All Heidaby is burned down!
From a far corner of the town
I saw, before the peep of morning,
Roofs, walls, and all in flame high
burning."

To this also Thorleik alludes in his verses, when he heard there had been no battle at the Gaut river:—

"The stranger-warrior may inquire
Of Harald's men, why in his ire
On Heidaby his wrath he turns,
And the fair town to ashes burns?
Would that the day had never come
When Harald's ships returned home
From the East sea, since now the
town,
Without his gain, is burned down!"

35.—HARALD'S ESCAPE INTO THE JUTLAND SEA.

Then King Harald sailed north and had sixty ships and the most of them large and heavily laden with the booty taken in summer; and as they sailed north past Thioda King Svein came down from the land with a great force and he challenged King Harald to land and fight. King Harald had little more than half the force of King Svein

and therefore he challenged Svein to fight at sea. So says Thorleik the Fair:—

"Svein, who of all men under heaven
Has had the luckiest birth-hour given,
Invites his foemen to the field,
There to contest with blood-stained shield.
The king, impatient of delay,
Harald, will with his sea-hawks stay;
On board will fight, and fate decide
If Svein shall by his land abide."

After that King Harald sailed north along Vendilskage; and the wind then came against them, and they brought up under Hlesey, where they lay all night. A thick fog lay upon the sea; and when the morning came and the sun rose they saw upon the other side of the sea as if many lights were burning. This was told to King Harald; and he looked at it, and said immediately, "Strike the tilts down on the ships and take to the oars. The Danish forces are coming upon us, and the fog there where they are must have cleared off, and the sun shines upon the dragon-heads of their ships, which are gilded, and that is what we see." It was so as he had said. Svein had come there with a prodigious armed force. They rowed now on both sides all they could. The Danish ships flew lighter before the oars; for the Northmen's ships were both soaked with water and heavily laden, so that the Danes approached nearer and nearer. Then Harald, whose own dragon-ship was the last of the fleet, saw that he could not get away; so he ordered his men to throw overboard some wood, and lay upon it clothes and other good and valuable articles; and it was so perfectly calm that these drove about with the tide. Now when the Danes saw their own goods driving about on the sea, they who were in advance turned about to save them; for they thought

it was easier to take what was floating freely about, than to go on board the Northmen to take it. They dropped rowing and lost ground. Now when King Svein came up to them with his ship, he urged them on, saying it would be a great shame if they, with so great a force, could not overtake and master so small a number. The Danes then began again to stretch out lustily at their oars. When King Harald saw that the Danish ships went faster he ordered his men to lighten their ships, and cast overboard malt, wheat, bacon, and to let their liquor run out, which helped a little. Then Harald ordered the bulwark-screens, the empty casks and puncheons and the prisoners to be thrown overboard; and when all these were driving about on the sea, Svein ordered help to be given to save the men. This was done; but so much time was lost that they separated from each other. The Danes turned back and the Northmen proceeded on their way. So says Thorleik the Fair:

"Svein drove his foes from Jutland's coast,—
The Norsemen's ships would have been lost,
But Harald all his vessels saves,
Throwing his booty on the waves.
The Jutlanders saw, as he threw,
Their own goods floating in their view:
His lighten'd ships fly o'er the main
While they pick up their own again."

King Svein returned southwards with his ships to Hlesey, where he found seven ships of the Northmen, with bondes and men of the levy. When King Svein came to them they begged for mercy, and offered ransom for themselves. So says Thorleik the Fair:—

"The stern king's men good offers make,
If Svein will ransom for them take;
Too few to fight, they boldly say
Unequal force makes them give way.
The hasty bondes for a word
Would have betaken them to the sword,
And have prolonged a bloody strife—
Such men can give no price for life."

36.—OF HARALD.

King Harald was a great man, who ruled his kingdom well in home-concerns. Very prudent was he, of good understanding; and it is the universal opinion that no chief ever was in northern lands of such deep judgment and ready counsel as Harald. He was a great warrior; bold in arms; strong and expert in the use of his weapons beyond any others, as has been before related, although many of the feats of his manhood are not here written down. This is owing partly to our uncertainty about them, partly to our wish not to put stories into this book for which there is no testimony. Although we have heard many things talked about, and even circumstantially related, yet we think it better that something may be added to, than that it should be necessary to take something away from our narrative. A great part of his history is put in verse by Iceland men, which poems they presented to him or his sons, and for which reason he was their great friend. He was, indeed, a great friend to all the people of that country; and once, when a very dear time set in, he allowed four ships to transport meal to Iceland, and fixed that the shippund should not be dearer than 100 ells of wadmal. He permitted also all poor people, who could find provisions to keep them on the voyage across the sea, to emigrate from Iceland to Norway; and from that time there was better subsistence in the country, and the seasons also turned out better. King Harald also sent from Norway a bell for the church of which Olaf the Saint had sent the timbers to Iceland, and which was erected on the Thing-plain. Such remembrances of King

Harald are found here in the country, besides many great gifts which he presented to those who visited him.

37.—OF HALDOR SNORRASON.

Haldor Snorrason and Ulf Uspakson, as before related, came to Norway with King Harald. They were, in many respects, of different dispositions. Haldor was very stout and strong, and remarkably handsome in appearance. King Harald gave him this testimony, that he, among all his men, cared least about doubtful circumstances, whether they betokened danger or pleasure; for, whatever turned up, he was never in higher nor in lower spirits, never slept less nor more on account of them, nor ate or drank but according to his custom. Haldor was not a man of many words, but short in conversation, told his opinion bluntly and was obstinate and hard; and this could not please the king, who had many clever people about him zealous in his service. Haldor remained a short time with the king; and then came to Iceland, where he took up his abode in Hjardarholt, and dwelt in that farm to a very advanced age.

38.—OF ULF USPAKSON.

Ulf Uspakson stood in great esteem with King Harald; for he was a man of great understanding, clever in conversation, active and brave, and withal true and sincere. King Harald made Ulf his marshal, and married him to Jorun, Thorberg's daughter, a sister of Harald's wife, Thora. Ulf and Jorun's children were Joan the Strong of Rasvol, and Brigida, mother of Sauda-Ulf, who was

father of Peter Byrdar-Svein, father of Ulf Fly and Sigrid. Joan the Strong's son was Erlend Himalde, father of Archbishop Eystein and his brothers. King Harald gave Ulf the marshal the rights of a lenderman and a fief of twelve marks income, besides a half-district in the Throndhjem land. Of this Stein Herdison speaks in his song about Ulf.

39.—OF THE BUILDING OF CHURCHES AND HOUSES.

King Magnus Olafson built Olaf's church in the town (Nidaros), on the spot where Olaf's body was set down for the night, and which, at that time, was above the town. He also had the king's house built there. The church was not quite finished when the king died; but King Harald had what was wanting completed. There, beside the house, he began to construct a stone hall, but it was not finished when he died. King Harald had the church called Mary Church built from the foundations up, at the sand-hill close to the spot where the king's holy remains were concealed in the earth the first winter after his fall. It was a large temple, and so strongly built with lime that it was difficult to break it when the Archbishop Eystein had it pulled down. Olaf's holy remains were kept in Olaf's church while Mary Church was building. King Harald had the king's house erected below Mary Kirk, at the side of the river, where it now is; and he had the house in which he had made the great hall consecrated and called Gregorius Church.

40.—BEGINNING OF HAKON IVARSON'S STORY.

There was a man called Ivar the White, who was a

brave lenderman dwelling in the Uplands, and was a daughter's son of Earl Hakon the Great. Ivar was the handsomest man that could be seen. Ivar's son was called Hakon; and of him it was said that he was distinguished above all men then in Norway for beauty, strength and perfection of figure. In his very youth he had been sent out on war expeditions, where he acquired great honour and consideration, and became afterwards one of the most celebrated men.

41.—OF EINAR TAMBASKELFER.

Einar Tambaskelfer was the most powerful lenderman in the Throndhjem land. There was but little friendship between him and King Harald, although Einar retained all the fiefs he had held while Magnus the Good lived. Einar had many large estates, and was married to Bergliot, a daughter Earl Hakon, as related above. Their son Eindride was grown up, and married to Sigrid, a daughter of Ketil Kalf and Gunhild, King Harald's sister's daughter. Eindride had inherited the beauty of his mother's father, Earl Hakon, and his sons; and in size and strength he took after his father, Einar, and also in all bodily perfections by which Einar had been distinguished above other men. He was, also, as well as his father, the most popular of men, which the sagas, indeed, show sufficiently.

42.—OF EARL ORM.

Orm was at that time earl in the Uplands. His mother was Ragnhild, a daughter of Earl Hakon the Great, and Orm was a remarkably clever man. Aslak Erlingson was

then in Jadar at Sole, and was married to Sigrid, a daughter of Earl Svein Hakonson. Gunhild, Earl Svein's other daughter, was married to the Danish king, Svein Ulfson. These were the descendants of Earl Hakon at that time in Norway, besides many other distinguished people; and the whole race was remarkable for their very beautiful appearance, and the most of them were gifted with great bodily perfection, and were all distinguished and important men.

43.—HARALD'S PRIDE.

King Harald was very proud, and his pride increased after he was established in the country; and it came so far that at last it was not good to speak against him, or to propose anything different from what he desired. So says Thiodolf, the skald:—

"In arms 'tis right the common man
Should follow orders, one by one,—
Should stoop or rise, or run or stand,
As his war-leader may command;
But now to the king who feeds the ravens
The people bend like heartless cravens—
Nothing is left them, but consent
To what the king calls his intent."

44.—OF THE QUARREL OF KING HARALD AND EINAR TAMBASKELFER.

Einar Tambaskelfer was the principal man among the bondes all about Throndhjem, and answered for them at the Things even against the king's men. Einar knew well the law, and did not want boldness to bring forward his opinion at Things, even if the king was present; and all the bondes stood by him. The king was very angry at this, and it came so far that they disputed eagerly against each other. Einar said that the bondes would not put up

with any unlawful proceedings from him if he broke through the law of the land; and this occurred several times between them. Einar then began to keep people about him at home, and he had many more when he came into the town if the king was there. It once happened that Einar came to the town with a great many men and ships; he had with him eight or nine great war-ships and nearly 500 men. When he came to the town he went up from the strand with his attendants. King Harald was then in his house, standing out in the gallery of the loft; and when he saw Einar's people going on shore, it is said Harald composed these verses:—

"I see great Tambaskelfer go,
With mighty pomp, and pride, and show,
Across the ebb-shore up the land,—
Before, behind, an armed band.
This bonde-leader thinks to rule,
And fill himself the royal stool.

A goodly earl I have known
With fewer followers of his own.
He who strikes fire from the shield,
Einar, may some day make us yield,
Unless our axe-edge quickly ends,
With sudden kiss, what he intends."

Einar remained several days in the town.

45.—THE FALL OF EINAR AND EINDRIDE.

One day there was a meeting held in the town, at which the king himself was present. A thief had beeen taken in the town, and he was brought before the Thing. The man had before been in the service of Einar, who had been very well satisfied with him. This was told to Einar, and he well knew the king would not let the man off, and more because he took an interest in the matter. Einar, therefore, let his men get under arms, went to the Thing, and took the man by force. The friends on both sides then came between and endeavoured to effect a reconciliation; and they succeeded so far that a meeting-place was

appointed, to which both should come. There was a Thing-room in the king's house at the river Nid, and the king went into it with a few men, while the most of his people were out in the yard. The king ordered the shutters of the loft-opening to be turned, so that there was but a little space left clear. When Einar came into the yard with his people, he told his son Eindride to remain outside with the men, "for there is no danger here for me." Eindride remained standing outside at the room-door. When Einar came into the Thing-room, he said, "It is dark in the king's Thing-room." At that moment some men ran against him and assaulted him,—some with spears, some with swords. When Eindride heard this he drew his sword and rushed into the room; but he was instantly killed along with his father. The king's men then ran up and placed themselves before the door, and the bondes lost courage, having no leader. They urged each other on, indeed, and said it was a shame they should not avenge their chief; but it came to nothing with their attack. The king went out to his men, arrayed them in battle order, and set up his standard; but the bondes did not venture to assault. Then the king went with all his men on board of his ships, rowed down the river, and then took his way out of the fjord. When Einar's wife Bergliot, who was in the house which Einar had possessed in the town, heard of Einar's fall, she went immediately to the king's house where the bondes army was and urged them to the attack; but at the same moment the king was rowing out of the river. Then said Bergliot, "Now we want here my relation, Hakon Ivarson: Einar's murderer would not be

rowing out of the river if Ivar stood here on the river-bank." Then Bergliot adorned Einar's and Eindride's corpses and buried them in Olaf's church, beside King Magnus Olafson's burial-place. After Einar's murder the king was so much disliked for that deed that there was nothing that prevented the lendermen and bondes from attacking the king, and giving him battle, but the want of some leader to raise the banner in the bonde army.

46.—OF KING HARALD AND FIN ARNASON.

Fin Arnason dwelt at Austrat in Yrjar, and was King Harald's lenderman there. Fin was married to Bergliot, a daughter of Halfdan, who was a son of Sigurd Syr, and brother of Olaf the Saint and of King Harald. Thora, King Harald's wife, was Fin Arnason's brother's daughter: and Fin and all his brothers were the king's dearest friends. Fin Arnason had been for some summers on a viking cruise in the West sea; and Fin, Guthorm Gunhildson and Hakon Ivarson had all been together on that cruise. King Harald now proceeded out of Throndhjem fjord to Austrat, where he was well received. Afterwards the king and Fin conversed with each other about this new event of Einar's and his son's death, and of the murmuring and threatening which the bondes made against the king.

Fin took up the conversation briskly, and said, "Thou art managing ill in two ways: first, in doing all manner of mischief; and next, in being so afraid that thou knowest not what to do."

The king replied, laughing, "I will send thee, friend,

into the town to bring about a reconciliation with the bondes; and if that will not do, thou must go to the Uplands and bring matters to such an understanding with Hakon Ivarson that he shall not be my opponent."

Fin replies, "And how wilt thou reward me if I undertake this dangerous errand; for both the people of Throndhjem and the people of Upland are so great enemies to thee that it would not be safe for any of thy messengers to come among them, unless he were one who would be spared for his own sake?"

The king replies, "Go thou on this embassy, for I know thou wilt succeed in it if any man can, and bring about a reconciliation; and then choose whatever favour from us thou wilt."

Fin says, "Hold thou thy word, king, and I will choose my petition. I will desire to have peace and safe residence in the country for my brother Kalf, and all his estates restored; and also that he receive all the dignity and power he had when he left the country."

The king assented to all that Fin laid down, and it was confirmed by witnesses and shake of hand.

Then said Fin, "What shall I offer Hakon, who rules most among his relations in the land, to induce him to agree to a treaty and reconciliation with thee?"

The king replies, "Thou shalt first hear what Hakon on his part requires for making an agreement; then promote my interest as thou art best able; and deny him nothing in the end short of the kingdom."

Then King Harald proceeded southwards to More, and drew together men in considerable numbers.

47.—OF FIN ARNASON'S JOURNEY.

Fin Arnason proceeded to the town and had with him his house-servants, nearly eighty men. When he came into the town he held a Thing with the town's people. Fin spoke long and ably at the Thing; and told the town's people, and bondes, above all things not to have a hatred against their king, or to drive him away. He reminded them of how much evil they had suffered by acting thus against King Olaf the Saint; and added, that the king was willing to pay penalty for this murder, according to the judgment of understanding and good men. The effect of Fin's speech was that the bondes promised to wait quietly until the messengers came back whom Bergliot had sent to the Uplands to her relative, Hakon Ivarson. Fin then went out to Orkadal with the men who had accompanied him to the town. From thence he went up to Dovrefield, and eastwards over the mountains. He went first to his son-in-law, Earl Orm, who was married to Sigrid, Fin's daughter, and told him his business.

48.—OF FIN AND HAKON IVARSON.

Then Fin and Earl Orm appointed a meeting with Hakon Ivarson; and when they met Fin explained his errand to Hakon, and the offer which King Harald made him. It was soon seen, from Hakon's speech, that he considered it to be his great duty to avenge the death of his relative, Eindride; and added, that word was come to him from Throndhjem, from which he might expect help in making head against the king. Then Fin represented to Hakon how much better it would be for him to accept of

as high a dignity from the king as he himself could desire, rather than to attempt raising a strife against the king to whom he was owing service and duty. He said if he came out of the conflict without victory, he forfeited life and property: "And even if thou hast the victory, thou wilt still be called a traitor to thy sovereign." Earl Orm also supported Fin's speech. After Hakon had reflected upon this he disclosed what lay on his mind, and said, "I will be reconciled with King Harald if he will give me in marriage his relation Ragnhild, King Magnus Olafson's daughter, with such dower as is suitable to her and she will be content with." Fin said he would agree to this on the king's part; and thus it was settled among them. Fin then returned to Throndhjem, and the disturbance and enmity was quashed, so that the king could retain his kingdom in peace at home; and the league was broken which Eindride's relations had made among themselves for opposing King Harald.

49.—OF THE COURTSHIP OF HAKON IVARSON.

When the day arrived for the meeting at which this agreement with Harald should be finally concluded, Hakon went to King Harald; and in their conference the king said that he, for his part, would adhere to all that was settled in their agreement. "Thou Hakon," says he, "must thyself settle that which concerns Ragnhild, as to her accepting thee in marriage; for it would not be advisable for thee, or for any one, to marry Ragnhild without her consent." Then Hakon went to Ragnhild, and paid his addresses to her. She answered him thus: "I have

often to feel that my father, King Magnus, is dead and gone from me, since I must marry a bonde; although I acknowledge thou art a handsome man, expert in all exercises. But if King Magnus had lived he would not have married me to any man less than a king; so it is not to be expected that I will take a man who has no dignity or title." Then Hakon went to King Harald and told him his conversation with Ragnhild, and also repeated the agreement which was made between him and Fin, who was with him, together with many others of the persons who had been present at the conversation between him and Fin. Hakon takes them all to witness that such was the agreement that the king should give Ragnhild the dower she might desire. "And now since she will have no man who has not a high dignity, thou must give me such a title of houour; and, according to the opinion of the people, I am of birth, family and other qualifications to be called earl."

The king replies, "When my brother, King Olaf, and his son, King Magnus, ruled the kingdom, they allowed only one earl at a time to be in the country, and I have done the same since I came to the kingly title; and I will not take away from Orm the title of honour I had before given him."

Hakon saw now that his business had not advanced, and was very ill pleased; and Fin was outrageously angry. They said the king had broken his word; and thus they all separated.

50.—HAKON'S JOURNEY TO DENMARK.

Hakon then went out of the country with a well-

manned ship. When he came to Denmark he went immediately to his relative, King Svein, who received him honourably and gave him great fiefs. Hakon became King Svein's commander of the coast defence against the vikings,—the Vindland people, Kurland people, and others from the East countries,—who infested the Danish dominions; and he lay out with his ships of war both winter and summer.

51.—MURDER OF ASMUND.

There was a man called Asmund, who is said to have been King Svein's sister's son, and his foster-son. This Asmund was distinguished among all by his boldness and was much disliked by the king. When Asmund came to years, and to age of discretion, he became an ungovernable person given to murder and manslaughter. The king was ill pleased at this, and sent him away, giving him a good fief, which might keep him and his followers well. As soon as Asmund had got this property from the king he drew together a large troop of people; and as the estate he had got from the king was not sufficient for his expenses he took as his own much more which belonged to the king. When the king heard this he summoned Asmund to him, and when they met the king said that Asmund should remain with the court without keeping any retinue of his own; and this took place as the king desired. But when Asmund had been a little time in the king's court he grew weary of being there, and escaped in the night, returned to his former companions and did more

mischief than ever. Now when the king was riding through the country he came to the neighbourhood where Asmund was, and he sent out men-at-arms to seize him. The king then had him laid in irons, and kept him so for some time in hope he would reform; but no sooner did Asmund get rid of his chains than he absconded again, gathered together people and men-at-arms and betook himself to plunder, both abroad and at home. Thus he made great forays, killing and plundering all around. When the people who suffered under these disturbances came to the king and complained to him of their losses, he replied, "Why do ye tell me of this? Why don't you go to Hakon Ivarson, who is my officer for the land-defence, placed on purpose to keep the peace for you peasants, and to hold the vikings in check? I was told that Hakon was a gallant and brave man, but I think he is rather shy when any danger of life is in the way." These words of the king were brought to Hakon, with many additions. Then Hakon went with his men in search of Asmund, and when their ships met Hakon gave battle immediately; and the conflict was sharp, and many men were killed. Hakon boarded Asmund's ship and cut down the men before his feet. At last he and Asmund met and exchanged blows until Asmund fell. Hakon cut off his head, went in all haste to King Svein and found him just sitting down to the dinner-table. Hakon presented himself before the table, laid Asmund's head upon the table before the king, and asked if he knew it. The king made no reply, but became as red as blood in the face. Soon after the king sent him a message, ordering him to leave his service

immediately. "Tell him I will do him no harm; but I cannot keep watch over all our relations."[1]

52.—HAKON IVARSON'S MARRIAGE.

Hakon then left Denmark, and came north to his estates in Norway. His relation Earl Orm was dead. Hakon's relations and friends were glad to see Hakon, and many gallant men gave themselves much trouble to bring about a reconciliation between King Harald and Hakon. It was at last settled in this way, that Hakon got Ragnhild, the king's daughter, and that King Harald gave Hakon the earldom, with the same power Earl Orm had possessed. Hakon swore to King Harald an oath of fidelity to all the services he was liable to fulfill.

53.—RECONCILIATION OF KING HARALD AND KALF.

Kalf Arnason had been on a viking cruise to the Western countries ever since he had left Norway; but in winter he was often in the Orkney Islands with his relative, Earl Thorfin. Fin Arnason sent a message to his brother Kalf, and told him the agreement which he had made with King Harald, that Kalf should enjoy safety in Norway, and his estates, and all the fiefs he had held from King Magnus. When this message came to Kalf he immediately got ready for his voyage, and went east to Norway to his brother Fin. Then Fin obtained the king's peace for Kalf, and when Kalf and the king met they went into the agreement which Fin and the king had

[1]This incident shows how strong, in those ages, was the tie of relationship, and the point of honour of avenging its injuries—the clanship spirit.—L.

settled upon before. Kalf bound himself to the king in the same way as he had bound himself to serve King Magnus, according to which Kalf should do all that the king desired and considered of advantage to his realm. Thereupon Kalf received all the estates and fiefs he had before.

54.—FALL OF KALF ARNASON.

The summer following (1050) King Harald ordered out a levy, and went to Denmark, where he plundered during the summer; but when he came south to Fyen he found a great force assembled against him. Then the king prepared to land his men from the ships and to engage in a land-fight. He drew up his men on board in order of battle; set Kalf Arnason at the head of one division; ordered him to make the first attack, and told him where they should direct their assault, promising that he would soon make a landing with the others, and come to their assistance. When Kalf came to the land with his men a force came down immediately to oppose them, and Kalf without delay engaged in battle, which, however, did not last long; for Kalf was immediately overpowered by numbers, and betook himself to flight with his men. The Danes pursued them vigorously, and many of the Northmen fell, and among them Kalf Arnason. Now King Harald landed with his array; and they soon came on their way to the field of battle, where they found Kalf's body, and bore it down to the ships. But the king penetrated into the country, killing many people and destroying much. So says Arnor:—

"His shining sword with blood he stains,
Upon Fyona's grassy plains;
And in the midst of fire and smoke,
The king Fyona's forces broke."

55.—FIN ARNASON'S EXPEDITION OUT OF THE COUNTRY.

After this Fin Arnason thought he had cause to be an enemy of the king upon account of his brother Kalf's death; and said the king had betrayed Kalf to his fall, and had also deceived him by making him entice his brother Kalf to come over from the West and trust to King Harald's faith. When these speeches came out among people, many said that it was very foolish in Fin to have ever supposed that Kalf could obtain the king's sincere friendship and favour; for they thought the king was the man to seek revenge for smaller offences than Kalf had committed against the king. The king let every one say what he chose, and he himself neither said yes or no about the affair; but people perceived that the king was very well pleased with what had happened. King Harald once made these verses:—

"I have, in all, the death-stroke given
To foes of mine at least eleven;
Two more, perhaps, if I remember.
May yet be added to this number,
I prize myself upon these deeds,
My people such examples needs.
Bright gold itself they would despise,
Or healing leek-herb underprize,
If not still brought before their eyes."

Fin Arnason took the business so much to heart that he left the country and went to Denmark to King Svein, where he met a friendly reception. They spoke together in private for a long time; and the end of the business was that Fin went into King Svein's service, and became his man. King Svein then gave Fin an earldom, and placed him in Halland, where he was long earl and defended the country against the Northmen.

56.—OF GUTHORM GUNHILDSON.

Ketil Kalf and Gunhild of Ringanes had a son called

Guthorm, and he was a sister's son to King Olaf and Harald Sigurdson. Guthorm was a gallant man, early advanced to manhood. He was often with King Harald, who loved him much, and asked his advice; for he was of good understanding, and very popular. Guthorm had also been engaged early in forays, and had marauded much in the Western countries with a large force. Ireland was for him a land of peace; and he had his winter quarters often in Dublin, and was in great friendship with King Margad.

57.—GUTHORM'S JUNCTION WITH THE IRISH KING MARGAD.

The summer after King Margad, and Guthorm with him, went out on an expedition against Bretland, where they made immense booty. But when the king saw the quantity of silver which was gathered he wanted to have the whole booty, and regarded little his friendship for Guthorm. Guthorm was ill pleased that he and his men should be robbed of their share; but the king said, "Thou must choose one of two things,—either to be content with what we determine, or to fight; and they shall have the booty who gain the victory; and likewise thou must give up thy ships, for them I will have." Guthorm thought there were great difficulties on both sides; for it was disgraceful to give up ships and goods without a stroke, and yet it was highly dangerous to fight the king and his force, the king having sixteen ships and Guthorm only five. Then Guthorm desired three days' time to consider the matter with his people, thinking in that time to pacify

the king, and come to a better understanding with him through the mediation of others; but he could not obtain from the king what he desired. This was the day before St. Olaf's day. Guthorm chose the condition that they would rather die or conquer like men, than suffer disgrace, contempt and scorn, by submitting to so great a loss. He called upon God, and his uncle Saint Olaf, and entreated their help and aid; promising to give to the holy man's house the tenth of all the booty that fell to their share, if they gained the victory. Then he arranged his men, placed them in battle order against the great force, prepared for battle, and gave the assault. By the help of God, and the holy Saint Olaf, Guthorm won the battle. King Margad fell, and every man, old and young, who followed him; and after that great victory, Guthorm and all his people returned home joyfully with all the booty they had gained by the battle. Every tenth penny of the booty they had made was taken, according to the vow, to King Olaf the Saint's shrine; and there was so much silver that Guthorm had an image made of it, with rays round the head, which was the size of his own, or of his forecastle-man's head; and the image was seven feet high. The image thus produced was given by Guthorm to King Olaf of the Saint's temple, where it has since remained as a memorial of Guthorm's victory and King Olaf the Saint's miracle.

58.—MIRACLE OF KING OLAF IN DENMARK.

There was a wicked, evil-minded count in Denmark who had a Norwegian servant-girl whose family belonged

to Throndhjem district. She worshipped King Olaf the Saint, and believed firmly in his sanctity. But the above-mentioned count doubted all that was told of the holy man's miracles, insisted that it was nothing but nonsense and idle talk, and made a joke and scorn of the esteem and honour which all the country people showed the good king. Now when his holyday came, on which the mild monarch ended his life, and which all Northmen kept sacred, this unreasonable count would not observe it, but ordered his servant-girl to bake and put fire in the oven that day. She knew well the count's mad passion, and that he would revenge himself severely on her if she refused doing as he ordered. She went, therefore, of necessity, and baked in the oven, but wept much at her work; and she threatened King Olaf that she never would believe in him, if he did not avenge this misdeed by some mischance or other. And now shall ye come to hear a well-deserved vengeance, and a true miracle. It happened, namely, in the same hour that the count became blind of both eyes, and the bread which she had shoved into the oven was turned into stone! Of these stones some are now in St. Olaf's temple, and in other places; and since that time Olafsmas has been always held holy in Denmark.

59.—KING OLAF'S MIRACLE ON A CRIPPLE.

West in Valland, a man had such bad health that he became a cripple, and went on his knees and elbows. One day he was upon the road, and had fallen asleep. He dreamt that a gallant man came up to him and asked him where he was going. When he named the neighbouring

town, the man said to him, "Go to Saint Olaf's church that stands in London, and there thou shalt be cured." Thereupon he awoke, and went straightway to inquire the road to Olaf's church in London. At last he came to London Bridge, and asked the men of the castle if they could tell him where Olaf's church was; but they replied, there were so many churches that they could not tell to whom each of them was consecrated. Soon after a man came up and asked him where he wanted to go, and he answered to Olaf's church. Then said the man, "We shall both go together to Olaf's church, for I know the way to it." Thereupon they went over the bridge to the shrine where Olaf's church was; and when they came to the gates of the churchyard the man mounted over the half-door that was in the gate, but the cripple rolled himself in, and rose up immediately sound and strong: when he looked about him his conductor had vanished.

60.—KING HARALD'S FORAY IN DENMARK.

King Harald had built a merchant town in the East at Oslo, where he often resided; for there was good supply from the extensive cultivated district wide around. There also he had a convenient station to defend the country against the Danes, or to make an attack upon Denmark, which he was in the custom of doing often, although he kept no great force on foot. One summer King Harald went from thence with a few light ships and a few men. He steered southwards out from Viken, and, when the wind served, stood over to Jutland, and marauded; but the country people collected and defended the country.

Then King Harald steered to Limfjord, and went into the fjord. Limfjord is so formed that its entrance is like a narrow river; but when one gets farther into the fjord it spreads out into a wide sea. King Harald marauded on both sides of the land; and when the Danes gathered together on every side to oppose him, he lay at a small island which was uncultivated. They wanted drink on board his ships, and went up into the island to seek water; but finding none, they reported it to the king. He ordered them to look for some long earthworms on the island, and when they found one they brought it to the king. He ordered the people to bring the worm to a fire, and bake it before it, so that it should be thirsty. Then he ordered a thread to be tied round the tail of the worm, and to let it loose. The worm crept away immediately, while thread wound off from the clew as the worm took it away; and the people followed the worm until it sought downwards in the earth. There the king ordered them to dig for water, which they did, and found so much water that they had no want of it. King Harald now heard from his spies that King Svein was come with a large armament to the mouth of the fjord; but that it was too late for him to come into it, as only one ship at a time can come in. King Harald then steered with his fleet in through the fjord to where it was broadest to a place called Lusbreid. In the inmost bight, there is but a narrow neck of land dividing the fjord from the West sea. Thither King Harald rowed with his men towards evening; and at night when it was dark he unloaded his ships, drew them over the neck of land into the West sea, loaded them again, and

was ready with all this before day. He then steered northwards along the Jutland coast. People then said that Harald had escaped from the hands of the Danes. Harald said that he would come to Denmark next time with more people and larger vessels. King Harald then proceeded north to Throndhjem.

61.—KING HARALD HAD A SHIP BUILT.

King Harald remained all winter at Nidaros (1062) and had a vessel built out upon the strand, and it was a buss. The ship was built of the same size as the Long Serpent, and every part of her was finished with the greatest care. On the stem was a dragon-head, and on the stern a dragon-tail, and the sides of the bows of the ship were gilt. The vessel was of thirty-five rowers' benches, and was large for that size, and was remarkably handsome; for the king had everything belonging to the ship's equipment of the best, both sails and rigging, anchors and cables. King Harald sent a message in winter south to Denmark to King Svein, that he should come northwards in spring; that they should meet at the Gaut river and fight, and so settle the division of the countries that the one who gained the victory should have both kingdoms.

62.—KING HARALD'S CHALLENGE.

King Harald during this winter called out a general levy of all the people of Norway, and assembled a great force towards spring. Then Harald had his great ship drawn down and put into the river Nid, and set up the

dragon's head on her. Thiodolf, the skald, sang about it thus:—

"My lovely girl! the sight was grand
When the great war-ships down the strand
Into the river gently slid,
And all below her sides was hid.
Come, lovely girl, and see the show!—
Her sides that on the water glow,
Her serpent-head with golden mane,
All shining back from the Nid again."

Then King Harald rigged out his ship, got ready for sea, and when he had all in order went out of the river. His men rowed very skilfully and beautifully. So says Thiodolf:—

"It was upon a Saturday,
Ship-tilts were struck and stowed away,
And past the town our dragon glides,
That girls might see our glancing sides.
Out from the Nid brave Harald steers;
Westward at first the dragon veers;
Our lads together down with oars,
The splash is echoed round the shores.

"Their oars our king's men handle well,
One stroke is all the eye can tell:
All level o'er the water rise;
The girls look on in sweet surprise.
Such things, they think, can ne'er give way;
They little know the battle day.
The Danish girls, who dread our shout,
Might wish our ship-gear not so stout.

"'Tis in the fight, not on the wave,
That oars may break and fail the brave.
At sea, beneath the ice-cold sky,
Safely our oars o'er ocean ply;
And when at Throndhjem's holy stream
Our seventy oars in distance gleam,
We seem, while rowing from the sea,
An erne with iron wings to be."

King Harald sailed south along the land, and called out the levy everywhere of men and ships. When they came east to Viken they got a strong wind against them and the forces lay dispersed about in the harbour; some in the isles outside, and some in the fjords. So says Thiodolf:—

"The cutters' sea-bleached bows scarce find
A shelter from the furious wind
Under the inland forests' side,
Where the fjord runs its farthest tide.
In all the isles and creeks around
The bondes' ships lie on the ground,
And ships with gunwales hung with shields
Seek the lee-side of the green fields."

In the heavy storm that raged for some time the great

ship had need of good ground tackle. So says Thiodolf:—

"With lofty bow above the seas,
Which curl and fly before the breeze,
The gallant vessel rides and reels,
And every plunge her cable feels.

The storm that tries the spar and mast
Tries the main-anchor at the last:
The storm above, below the rock,
Chafe the thick cable with each shock."

When the weather became favourable King Harald sailed eastwards to the Gaut river with his fleet and arrived there in the evening. So says Thiodolf:—

"The gallant Harald now has come
To Gaut, full half way from his home,
And on the river frontier stands,
To fight with Svein for life and lands.

The night passed o'er, the gallant king
Next day at Thumla calls a Thing,
Where Svein is challenged to appear—
A day which ravens wish were near."

63.—OF KING HARALD'S FLEET.

When the Danes heard that the Northmen's army was come to the Gaut river they all fled who had opportunity to get away. The Northmen heard that the Danish king had also called out his forces and lay in the south, partly at Fyen and partly about Seeland. When King Harald found that King Svein would not hold a meeting with him, or a fight, according to what had been agreed upon between them, he took the same course as before—letting the bonde troops return home, but manning 150 ships, with which he sailed southwards along Halland, where he herried all round, and then brought up with his fleet in Lofufjord, and laid waste the country. A little afterwards King Svein came upon them with all the Danish fleet, consisting of 300 ships. When the Northmen saw them King Harald ordered a general meeting of the fleet to be called by sound of trumpet; and many there said it was

better to fly, as it was not now advisable to fight. The king replied, "Sooner shall all lie dead one upon another than fly." So says Stein Herdison:—

"With falcon eye, and courage bright,
Our king saw glory in the fight;
To fly, he saw, would ruin bring
On them and him—the folk and king.

'Hand up the arms to one and all!'
Cries out the king; 'we'll win or fall!
Sooner than fly, heaped on each other
Each man shall fall across his brother!'"

Then King Harald drew up his ships to attack, and brought forward his great dragon in the middle of his fleet. So says Thiodolf:—

"The brave king through his vessels' throng
His dragon war-ship moves along;
He runs her gaily to the front,
To meet the coming battle's brunt."

The ship was remarkably well equipt, and fully manned. So says Thiodolf:—

"The king had got a chosen crew—
He told his brave lads to stand true.
The ring of shields seemed to enclose
The ship's deck from the boarding foes.

The dragon, on the Nis-river flood,
Beset with men, who thickly stood,
Shield touching shield, was something rare,
That seemed all force of man to dare."

Ulf, the marshal, laid his ship by the side of the king's and ordered his men to bring her well forward. Stein Herdison, who was himself in Ulf's ship, sings of it thus:—

"Our oars were stowed, our lances high,
As the ship moved swung in the sky.
The marshal Ulf went through our ranks,
Drawn up beside the rowers' banks:

The brave friend of our gallant king
Told us our ship well on to bring,
And fight like Norsemen in the cause—
Our Norsemen answered with huzzas."

Hakon Ivarson lay outside on the other wing, and had many ships with him, all well equipt. At the extremity of the other side lay the Throndhjem chiefs, who had also a great and strong force.

64.—OF KING SVEIN'S ARMAMENT.

Svein, the Danish king, also drew up his fleet, and laid his ship forward in the center against King Harald's ship, and Fin Arnason laid his ship next; and then the Danes laid their ships, according as they were bold or well equipt. Then, on both sides, they bound the ships together all through the middle of the fleets; but as the fleets were so large, very many ships remained loose, and each laid his ship forward according to his courage, and that was very unequal. Although the difference among the men was great, altogether there was a very great force on both sides. King Svein had six earls among the people following him. So says Stein Herdison:—

"Danger our chief would never shun,
With eight score ships he would not run;
The Danish fleet he would abide,
And give close battle side by side.
From Leire's coast the Danish king
Three hundred ocean steeds could bring,
And o'er the sea-weed plain in haste
Thought Harald's vessels would be chased."

65.—BEGINNING OF THE BATTLE OF NIS-RIVER.

As soon as King Harald was ready with his fleet, he orders the war-blast to sound, and the men to row forward to the attack. So says Stein Herdison:—

"Harald and Svein first met as foes,
Where the Nis in the ocean flows;
For Svein would not for peace entreat,
But, strong in ships, would Harald meet.
The Norsemen prove, with sword in hand,
That numbers cannot skill withstand.
Off Halland's coast the blood of Danes
The blue sea's calm smooth surface stains."

Soon the battle began, and became very sharp; both kings urging on their men. So says Stein Herdison:—

"Our king, his broad shield disregarding,
More keen for striking than for warding,
Now tells his lads their spears to throw,—
Now shows them where to strike a blow.
From fleet to fleet so short the way,
That stones and arrows have full play;
And from the keen sword dropped the blood
Of short-lived seamen in the flood."

It was late in the day when the battle began, and it continued the whole night. King Harald shot for a long time with his bow. So says Thiodolf:—

"The Upland king was all the night
Speeding the arrows' deadly flight.
All in the dark his bow-string's twang
Was answered; for some white shield rang,
Or yelling shriek gave certain note
The shaft had pierced some ring-mail coat.
The foemen's shields and bulwarks bore
A Lapland arrow-scat[1] or more."

Earl Hakon, and the people who followed him, did not make fast their ships in the fleet, but rowed against the Danish ships that were loose, and slew the men of all the ships they came up with. When the Danes observed this each drew his ship out of the way of the earl; but he set upon those who were trying to escape, and they were nearly driven to flight. Then a boat came rowing to the earl's ship and hailed him and said that the other wing of King Harald's fleet was giving way and many of their people had fallen. Then the earl rowed thither and gave so severe an assault that the Danes had to retreat before him. The earl went on in this way all the night, coming forward where he was most wanted, and wheresoever he came none could stand against him. Hakon rowed outside around the battle. Towards the end of the night the greatest part of the Danish fleet broke into flight, for then King Harald with his men boarded the vessel of King

[1]The Laplanders paid their scat, or yearly tax, in bows and arrows; and the meaning of the skald appears to be, that as many as were paid in a year were shot at the foe.—L.

Svein; and it was so completely cleared that all the crew fell in the ship, except those who sprang overboard. So says Arnor, the earls' skald:—

"Brave Svein did not his vessel leave
Without good cause, as I believe:
Oft on his casque the sword-blade rang,
Before into the sea he sprang.
Upon the wave his vessel drives;
All his brave crew had lost their lives.
O'er dead courtmen into the sea
The Jutland king had now to flee."

And when King Svein's banner was cut down, and his ship cleared of its crew, all his forces took to flight, and some were killed. The ships which were bound together could not be cast loose, so the people who were in them sprang overboard, and some got to the other ships that were loose; and all King Svein's men who could get off rowed away, but a great many of them were slain. Where the king himself fought the ships were mostly bound together, and there were more than seventy left behind of King Svein's vessels. So says Thiodolf:—

"Svein's ships rode proudly o'er the deep,
When, by a single sudden sweep,
Full seventy sail, as we are told,
Were seized by Norway's monarch bold."

King Harald rowed after the Danes and pursued them; but that was not easy, for the ships lay so thick together that they scarcely could move. Earl Fin Arnason would not flee; and being also shortsighted, was taken prisoner. So says Thiodolf:—

"To the six Danish earls who came
To aid his force, and raise his name,
No mighty thanks King Svein is owing
For mighty actions of their doing.
Fin Arnason, in battle known,
With a stout Norse heart of his own,
Would not take flight his life to gain,
And in the foremost ranks was ta'en."

66.—KING SVEIN'S FLIGHT.

Earl Hakon lay behind with his ships, while the king and the rest of the forces were pursuing the fugitives; for

the earls' ships could not get forward on account of the ships which lay in the way before him. Then a man came rowing in a boat to the earl's ship and lay at the bulwarks. The man was stout and had on a white hat. He hailed the ship, "Where is the earl?" said he.

The earl was in the fore-hold, stopping a man's blood. The earl cast a look at the man in the hat and asked what his name was. He answered, "Here is Vandrad: speak to me, earl."

The earl leant over the ship's side to him. Then the man in the boat said, "Earl, I will accept of my life from thee, if thou wilt give it."

Then the earl raised himself up, called two men who were friends dear to him, and said to them, "Go into the boat; bring Vandrad to the land; attend him to my friend's Karl the bonde; and tell Karl, as a token that these words come from me, that he let Vandrad have the horse which I gave to him yesterday, and also his saddle, and his son to attend him."

Thereupon they went into the boat and took the oars in hand, while Vandrad steered. This took place just about daybreak, while the vessels were in movement, some rowing towards the land, some towards the sea, both small and great. Vandrad steered where he thought there was most room between the vessels; and when they came near to Norway's ships the earl's men gave their names and then they all allowed them to go where they pleased. Vandrad steered along the shore, and only set in towards the land when they had come past the crowd of ships. They then went up to Karl the bonde's farm, and it was then

beginning to be light. They went into the room where Karl had just put on his clothes. The earl's men told him their message and Karl said they must first take some food; and he set a table before them and gave them water to wash with.

Then came the housewife into the room and said, "I wonder why we could get no peace or rest all night with the shouting and screaming."

Karl replies, "Dost thou not know that the kings were fighting all night?"

She asked which had the better of it.

Karl answered, "The Northmen gained."

"Then," said she, "our king will have taken flight."

"Nobody knows," says Karl, "whether he has fled or is fallen."

She says, "What a useless sort of king we have! He is both slow and frightened."

Then said Vandrad, "Frightened he is not; but he is not lucky."

Then Vandrad washed his hands; but he took the towel and dried them right in the middle of the cloth. The housewife snatched the towel from him, and said, "Thou hast been taught little good; it is wasteful to wet the whole cloth at one time."

Vandrad replies, "I may yet come so far forward in the world as to be able to dry myself with the middle of the towel."

Thereupon Karl set a table before them and Vandrad sat down between them. They ate for a while and then went out. The horse was saddled and Karl's son ready

to follow him with another horse. They rode away to the forest; and the earl's men returned to the boat, rowed to the earl's ship and told the success of their expedition.

67.—OF KING HARALD.

King Harald and his men followed the fugitives only a short way, and rowed back to the place where the deserted ships lay. Then the battle-place was ransacked, and in King Svein's ship was found a heap of dead men; but the king's body was not found, although people believed for certain that he had fallen. Then King Harald had the greatest attention paid to the dead of his men, and had the wounds of the living bound up. The dead bodies of Svein's men were brought to the land, and he sent a message to the peasants to come and bury them. Then he let the booty be divided, and this took up some time. The news came now that King Svein had come to Seeland, and that all who had escaped from the battle had joined him, along with many more, and that he had a great force.

68.—FIN ARNASON GETS QUARTER.

Earl Fin Arnason was taken prisoner in the battle, as before related; and when he was led before King Harald the king was very merry, and said, "Fin, we meet here now, and we met last in Norway. The Danish court has not stood very firmly by thee; and it will be a troublesome business for Northmen to drag thee, a blind old man, with them, and preserve thy life."

The earl replies, "The Northmen find it very difficult

now to conquer, and it is all the worse that thou hast the command of them."

Then said King Harald, "Wilt thou accept of life and safety, although thou hast not deserved it?"

The earl replies, "Not from thee, thou dog."

The king: "Wilt thou, then, if thy relation Magnus gives thee quarter?"

Magnus, King Harald's son, was then steering the ship.

The earl replies, "Can the whelp rule over life and quarter?"

The king laughed, as if he found amusement in vexing him.—"Wilt thou accept thy life, then, from thy she-relation Thorer?"

The earl: "Is she here?"

"She is here," said the king.

Then Earl Fin broke out with the ugly expressions which since have been preserved, as a proof that he was so mad with rage that he could not govern his tongue:—

"No wonder thou hast bit so strongly, if the mare was with thee.'

Earl Fin got life and quarter and the king kept him a while about him. But Fin was rather melancholy and obstinate in conversation; and King Harald said, "I see, Fin, that thou dost not live willingly in company with me and thy relations; now I will give thee leave to go to thy friend King Svein."

The earl said, "I accept of the offer willingly, and the more gratefully the sooner I get away from hence."

The king afterwards let Earl Fin be landed and the traders going to Halland received him well. King Harald

sailed from thence to Norway with his fleet; and went first to Oslo, where he gave all his people leave to go home who wished to do so.

69.—OF KING SVEIN.

King Svein, it is told, sat in Denmark all that winter, and had his kingdom as formerly. In winter he sent men north to Halland for Karl the bonde and his wife. When Karl came the king called him to him and asked him if he knew him, or thought he had ever seen him before.

Karl replies, "I know thee, sire, and knew thee before, the moment I saw thee; and God be praised if the small help I could give was of any use to thee."

The king replies, "I have to reward thee for all the days I have to live. And now, in the first place, I will give thee any farm in Seeland thou wouldst desire to have; and, in the next place, will make thee a great man, if thou knowest how to conduct thyself."

Karl thanked the king for his promise, and said he had now but one thing to ask.

The king asked what that was.

Karl said that he would ask to take his wife with him.

The king said, "I will not let thee do that; but I will provide thee a far better and more sensible wife. But thy wife can keep the bonde-farm ye had before and she will have her living from it."

The king gave Karl a great and valuable farm, and provided him a good marriage; and he became a considerable man. This was reported far and wide and much praised; and thus it came to be told in Norway,

70.—OF THE TALK OF THE COURT-MEN.

King Harald stayed in Oslo the winter after the battle at Nis-river (1063). In autumn, when the men came from the south, there was much talk and many stories about the battle which they had fought at Nis-river, and every one who had been there thought he could tell something about it. Once some of them sat in a cellar and drank, and were very merry and talkative. They talked about the Nis-river battle, and who had earned the greatest praise and renown. They all agreed that no man there had been at all equal to Earl Hakon. He was the boldest in arms, the quickest, and the most lucky; what he did was of the greatest help, and he won the battle. King Harald, in the meantime, was out in the yard, and spoke with some people. He went then to the room-door, and said, "Every one here would willingly be called Hakon;" and then went his way.

71.—OF THE ATTEMPT TO TAKE EARL HAKON.

Earl Hakon went in winter to the Uplands, and was all winter in his domains. He was much beloved by all the Uplanders. It happened, towards spring, that some men were sitting drinking in the town, and the conversation turned, as usual, on the Nis-river battle; and some praised Earl Hakon, and some thought others as deserving of praise as he. When they had thus disputed a while, one of them said, "It is possible that others fought as bravely as the earl at Nis-river; but none, I think, has had such luck with him as he."

The others replied, that his best luck was his driving so many Danes to flight along with other men.

The same man replied, "It was greater luck that he gave King Svein quarter."

One of the company said to him, "Thou dost not know what thou art saying."

He replied, "I know it for certain, for the man told me himself who brought the king to the land."

It went, according to the old proverb, that the king has many ears. This was told the king, and he immediately ordered horses to be gathered, and rode away directly with 200 men. He rode all that night and the following day. Then some men met them who were riding to the town with mead and malt. In the king's retinue was a man called Gamal, who rode to one of these bondes who was an acquaintance of his, and spoke to him privately. "I will pay thee," said he, "to ride with the greatest speed, by the shortest private paths that thou knowest, to Earl Hakon, and tell him the king will kill him; for the king has got to the knowledge that Earl Hakon set King Svein on shore at Nis-river." They agreed on the payment. The bonde rode, and came to the earl just as he was sitting drinking, and had not yet gone to bed. When the bonde told his errand, the earl immediately stood up with all his men, had all his loose property removed from the farm to the forest, and all the people left the house in the night. When the king came he halted there all night; but Hakon rode away, and came east to Svithjod to King Steinkel and stayed with him all summer. King Harald returned to the town, travelled northwards to Throndhjem district,

and remained there all summer; but in autumn he returned eastwards to Viken.

72.—OF EARL HAKON.

As soon as Earl Hakon heard the king had gone north he returned immediately in summer to the Uplands (1063), and remained there until the king had returned from the north. Then the earl went east into Vermaland, where he remained during the winter, and where the king, Steinkel, gave him fiefs. For a short time in winter he went west to Raumarike with a great troop of men from Gautland and Vermaland, and received the scat and duties from the Upland people which belonged to him, and then returned to Gautland, and remained there till spring. King Harald had his seat in Oslo all winter (1064), and sent his men to the Uplands to demand the scat, together with the king's land dues, and the mulcts of court; but the Uplanders said they would pay all the scat and dues which they had to pay, to Earl Hakon as long as he was in life, and had forfeited his life or his fief; and the king got no dues that winter.

73.—AGREEMENT BETWEEN KING HARALD AND KING SVEIN.

This winter messengers and ambassadors went between Norway and Denmark, whose errand was that both Northmen and Danes should make peace, and a league with each other, and to ask the kings to agree to it. These messages gave favourable hopes of a peace; and the

matter proceeded so far that a meeting for peace was appointed at the Gaut river between King Harald and King Svein. When spring approached, both kings assembled many ships and people for this meeting. So says a skald in a poem on this expedition of the kings, which begins thus:—

"The king, who from the northern sound
His land with war-ships girds around,
The raven-feeder, filled the coast
With his proud ships, a gallant host!
The gold-tipped stems dash through the foam
That shakes the seamen's planked home;
The high wave breaks up to the mast,
As west of Halland on they passed,

"Harald whose word is fixed and sure,
Whose ships his land from foes secure,
And Svein, whose isles maintain his fleet,
Hasten as friends again to meet;
And every creek with vessels teems,—
All Denmark men and shipping seems;
And all rejoice that strife will cease,
And men meet now but to make peace."

Here it is told that the two kings held the meeting that was agreed upon between them, and both came to the frontiers of their kingdoms. So says the skald:—

"To meet (since peace the Dane now craves)
On to the south upon the waves
Sailed forth our gallant northern king,
Peace to the Danes with him to bring.

Svein northward to his frontier hies
To get the peace his people prize,
And meet King Harald, whom he finds
On land hard used by stormy winds."

When the kings found each other, people began at once to talk of their being reconciled. But as soon as peace was proposed, many began to complain of the damage they had sustained by harrying, robbing and killing men; and for a long time it did not look very like peace. It is here related:—

"Before this meeting of the kings
Each bonde his own losses brings,
And loudly claims some recompense
From his king's foes, at their expense.

It is not easy to make peace,
Where noise and talking never cease:
The bondes' warmth may quickly spread.
And kings be by the people led.

"When kings are moved, no peace is sure;
For that peace only is secure
Which they who make it fairly make,—
To each side give, from each side take.
The kings will often rule but ill
Who listen to the people's will:
The people often have no view
But their own interests to pursue."

At last the best men, and those who were the wisest, came between the kings, and settled the peace thus:—that Harald should have Norway, and Svein Denmark, according to the boundaries of old established between Denmark and Norway; neither of them should pay to the other for any damage sustained; the war should cease as it now stood, each retaining what he had got; and this peace should endure as long as they were kings. This peace was confirmed by oath. Then the kings parted, having given each other hostages, as is here related:—

"And I have heard that to set fast
The peace God brought about at last,
Svein and stern Harald pledges sent,
Who witnessed to their sworn intent;
And much I wish that they and all
In no such perjury may fall
That this peace ever should be broken,
And oaths should fail before God spoken."

King Harald with his people sailed northwards to Norway, and King Svein southwards to Denmark.

74.—KING HARALD'S BATTLE WITH EARL HAKON.

King Harald was in Viken in the summer (1064), and he sent his men to the Uplands after the scat and duty which belonged to him; but the bondes paid no attention to the demand, but said they would hold all for Earl Hakon until he came for it. Earl Hakon was then up in Gautland with a large armed force. When summer was past King Harald went south to Konungahella. Then he took all the light-sailing vessels he could get hold of and

steered up the river. He had the vessels drawn past all the waterfalls and brought them thus into the Wener lake. Then he rowed eastward across the lake to where he heard Earl Hakon was; but when the earl got news of the king's expedition he retreated down the country, and would not let the king plunder the land. Earl Hakon had a large armed force which the Gautland people had raised for him. King Harald lay with his ships up in a river, and made a foray on land, but left some of his men behind to protect the ships. The king himself rode up with a part of the men, but the greater part were on foot. They had to cross a forest, where they found a mire or lake, and close to it a wood; and when they reached the wood they saw the earl's men, but the mire was between them. They drew up their people now on both sides. Then King Harald ordered his men to sit down on the hillside. "We will first see if they will attack us. Earl Hakon does not usually wait to talk." It was frosty weather, with some snow-drift, and Harald's men sat down under their shields; but it was cold for the Gautlanders, who had but little clothing with them. The earl told them to wait until King Harald came nearer, so that all would stand equally high on the ground. Earl Hakon had the same banner which had belonged to King Magnus Olafson.

The lagman of the Gautland people, Thorvid, sat upon a horse, and the bridle was fastened to a stake that stood in the mire. He broke out with these words: "God knows we have many brave and handsome fellows here, and we shall let King Steinkel hear that we stood by the good earl bravely. I am sure of one thing: we shall behave gal-

lantly against these Northmen, if they attack us; but if our young people give way, and should not stand to it, let us not run farther than to that stream; but if they should give way farther, which I am sure they will not do, let it not be farther than to that hill." At that instant the Northmen sprang up, raised the war-cry, and struck on their shields; and the Gautland army began also to shout. The lagman's horse got shy with the war-cry, and backed so hard that the stake flew up and struck the lagman on the head. He said, "Ill luck to thee, Northman, for that arrow!" and away fled the lagman. King Harald had told his people, "If we do make a clash with the weapons, we shall not however, go down from the hill until they come nearer to us;" and they did so. When the war-cry was raised the earl let his banner advance; but when they came under the hill the king's army rushed down upon them, and killed some of the earl's people, and the rest fled. The Northmen did not pursue the fugitives long, for it was the fall of day; but they took Earl Hakon's banner and all the arms and clothes they could get hold of. King Harald had both the banners carried before him as they marched away. They spoke among themselves that the earl had probably fallen. As they were riding through the forest they could only ride singly, one following the other. Suddenly a man came full gallop across the path, struck his spear through him who was carrying the earl's banner, seized the banner-staff, and rode into the forest on the other side with the banner. When this was told the king he said, "Bring me my armour, for the earl is alive." Then the king rode to his ships in the night; and many

said that the earl had now taken his revenge. But Thiodolf sang thus:—

"Steinkel's troops, who were so bold,
Who the Earl Hakon would uphold,
Were driven by our horsemen's power
To Hel, death goddess, in an hour;
And the great earl, so men say
Who won't admit he ran away,
Because his men fled from the ground,
Retired, and cannot now be found."

75.—DEATH OF HAL, THE MURDERER OF KODRAN.

The rest of the night Harald passed in his ships; but in the morning, when it was daylight, it was found that so thick ice had gathered about the vessels that one could walk around them. The king ordered his men to cut the ice from the ships all the way out to the clear water; on which they all went to break the ice. King Harald's son, Magnus, steered the vessel that lay lowest down the river and nearest the water. When the people had cleared the ice away almost entirely, a man ran out to the ice, and began hewing away at it like a madman. Then said one of the men, "It is going now as usual, that none can do so much as Hal who killed Kodran, when once he lays himself to the work. See how he is hewing away at the ice." There was a man in the crew of Magnus, the king's son, who was called Thormod Eindridason; and when he heard the name of Kodran's murderer he ran up to Hal, and gave him a death-wound. Kodran was a son of Gudmund Eyjolfson; and Valgerd, who was a sister of Gudmund, was the mother of Jorun, and the grandmother by the mother's side of this Thormod. Thormod was a year old when Kodran was killed, and had never seen Hal Utrygson until now. When the ice was broken all the way out to the water, Magnus drew his ship out, set sail

directly, and sailed westward across the lake; but the king's ship, which lay farthest up the river, came out the last. Hal had been in the king's retinue, and was very dear to him; so that the king was enraged at his death. The king came the last into the harbour, and Magnus had let the murderer escape into the forest, and offered to pay the mulct for him; and the king had very nearly attacked Magnus and his crew, but their friends came up and reconciled them.

76.—OF KING HARALD.

That winter (1065) King Harald went up to Raumarike, and had many people with him; and he accused the bondes there of having kept from him his scat and duties, and of having aided his enemies to raise disturbance against him. He seized on the bondes and maimed some, killed others, and robbed many of all their property. They who could do it fled from him. He burned everything in the districts and laid them altogether waste. So says Thiodolf:—

"He who the island-people drove,
When they against his power strove,
Now bridle's Raumarike's men,
Marching his forces through their glen.

To punish them the fire he lights
That shines afar off in dark nights
From house and yard, and, as he says,
Will warn the man who disobeys."

Thereafter the king went up to Hedemark, burnt the dwellings, and made no less waste and havoc there than in Raumarike. From thence he went to Hadeland and Ringerike, burning and ravaging all the land. So says Thiodolf:—

"The bonde's household goods are seen
Before his door upon the green,
Smoking and singed; and sparks red hot
Glow in the thatched roof of his cot.

In Hedemark the bondes pray
The king his crushing hand to stay;
In Ringerike and Hadeland,
None 'gainst his fiery wrath can stand."

Then the bondes left all to the king's mercy. After the death of King Magnus fifteen years had passed when the battle at Nis-river took place, and afterwards two years elapsed before Harald and Svein made peace. So says Thiodolf:—

"The Hordland king under the land
At anchor lay close to the strand,
At last, prepared with shield and spear
The peace was settled the third year."

After this peace the disturbances with the people of the Upland districts lasted a year and a half. So says Thiodolf:—

"No easy task it is to say
How the king brought beneath his sway
The Upland bondes, and would give
Nought but their ploughs from which to live.
The king in eighteen months brought down
Their bonde power, and raised his own,
And the great honour he has gained
Will still in memory be retained."

77.—OF THE KINGS OF ENGLAND.

Edward, Ethelred's son, was king of England after his brother Hardacanute. He was called Edward the Good; and so he was. King Edward's mother was Queen Emma, daughter of Richard, earl of Rouen. Her brother was Earl Robert, whose son was William the Bastard, who at that time was earl at Rouen in Normandy. King Edward's queen was Gyda, a daughter of Earl Godwin, the son of Ulfnad. Gyda's brothers were, Earl Toste, the eldest; Earl Morukare the next; Earl Walter the third; Earl Svein the fourth; and the fifth was Harald, who was the youngest, and he was brought up at King Edward's court, and was his foster-son. The king loved him very much, and kept him as his own son; for he had no children.

78.—OF HARALD GODWINSON.

One summer it happened that Harald, the son of Godwin, made an expedition to Bretland with his ships, but when they got to sea they met a contrary wind, and were driven off into the ocean. They landed west in Normandy, after suffering from a dangerous storm. They brought up at Rouen, where they met Earl William, who received Harald and his company gladly. Harald remained there late in harvest, and was hospitably entertained; for the stormy weather continued, and there was no getting to sea, and this continued until winter set in; so the earl and Harald agreed that he should remain there all winter. Harald sat on the high-seat on one side of the earl; and on the other side sat the earl's wife, one of the most beautiful women that could be seen. They often talked together for amusement at the drinking-table; and the earl went generally to bed, but Harald and the earl's wife sat long in the evenings talking together, and so it went on for a great part of the winter. In one of their conversations she said to Harald, "The earl has asked me what it is we have to talk about so much, for he is angry at it." Harald replies, "We shall then at once let him know all our conversation." The following day, Harald asked the earl to a conference, and they went together into the conference-chamber; where also the queen was, and some of the councillors. Then Harald began thus:—"I have to inform you, earl, that there lies more in my visit here than I have let you know. I would ask your daughter in marriage, and have often spoke over this matter with her mother, and she has promised to support my suit

with you." As soon as Harald had made known this proposal of his, it was well received by all who were present. They explained the case to the earl; and at last it came so far that the girl was contracted to Harald, but as she was very young, it was resolved that the wedding should be deferred for some years.

79.—KING EDWARD'S DEATH.

When spring came Harald rigged his ships and set off; and he and the earl parted with great friendsip. Harald sailed over to England to King Edward, but did not return to Valland to fulfill the marriage agreement. Edward was king over England for twenty-three years and died on a bed of sickness in London on the 5th of January, and was buried in Paul's church. Englishmen call him a saint.

80.—HARALD GODWINSON MADE KING OF ENGLAND.

The sons of Earl Godwin were the most powerful men in England. Toste was made chief of the English king's army, and was his land-defence man when the king began to grow old; and he was also placed above all the other earls. His brother Harald was always with the court itself, and nearest to the king in all service, and had the charge of the king's treasure-chamber. It is said that when the king was approaching his last hour, Harald and a few others were with him. Harald first leans down over the king, and then said, "I take you all to witness that the king has now given me the kingdom, and all the realm of England:" and then the king was taken dead out of the

bed. The same day there was a meeting of the chiefs, at which there was some talk of choosing a king; and then Harald brought forward his witnesses that King Edward had given him the kingdom on his dying day. The meeting ended by choosing Harald as king, and he was consecrated and crowned the 13th day of Yule, in Paul's church. Then all the chiefs and all the people submitted to him. Now when his brother, Earl Toste, heard of this he took it very ill, as he thought himself quite as well entitled to be king. "I want," said he, "that the principal men of the country choose him whom they think best fitted for it." And sharp words passed between the brothers. King Harald says he will not give up his kingly dignity, for he is seated on the throne which kings sat upon, and is anointed and consecrated a king. On his side also was the strength of the people, for he had the king's whole treasure.

81.—EARL TOSTE'S EXPEDITION TO DENMARK.

Now when King Harald perceived that his brother Toste wanted to have him deprived of the kingdom he did not trust him; for Toste was a clever man, and a great warrior, and was in friendship with the principal men of the country. He therefore took the command of the army from Toste, and also all the power he had beyond that of the other earls of the country. Earl Toste, again, would not submit to be his own brother's serving man; therefore he went with his people over the sea to Flanders, and stayed there awhile, then went to Friesland, and from thence to Denmark to his relation King Svein. Earl Ulf,

King Svein's father, and Gyda, Earl Toste's mother, were brother's and sister's children. The earl now asked King Svein for support and help of men; and King Svein invited him to stay with him, with the promise that he should get so large an earldom in Denmark that he would be an important chief.

The earl replies, "My inclination is to go back to my estate in England; but if I cannot get help from you for that purpose, I will agree to help you with all the power I can command in England, if you will go there with the Danish army, and win the country, as Canute, your mother's brother, did."

The king replied, "So much smaller a man am I than Canute the Great, that I can with difficulty defend my own Danish dominions against the Northmen. King Canute, on the other hand, got the Danish kingdom in heritage, took England by slash and blow, and sometimes was near losing his life in the contest; and Norway he took without slash or blow. Now it suits me much better to be guided by my own slender ability than to imitate my relation, King Canute's, lucky hits."

Then Earl Toste said, "The result of my errand here is less fortunate than I expected of thee who art so gallant a man, seeing that thy relative is in so great need. It may be that I will seek friendly help where it could less be expected; and that I may find a chief who is less afraid, king, than thou art of a great enterprise."

Then the king and the earl parted, not just the best friends.

82.—EARL TOSTE'S EXPEDITION TO NORWAY.

Earl Toste turned away then and went to Norway, where he presented himself to King Harald, who was at that time in Viken. When they met the earl explained his errand to the king. He told him all his proceedings since he left England, and asked his aid to recover his dominions in England.

The king replied that the Northmen had no great desire for a campaign in England, and to have English chiefs over them there. "People say," added he, "that the English are not to be trusted."

The earl replied, "Is it true what I have heard people tell in England, that thy relative, King Magnus, sent men to King Edward with the message that King Magnus had right to England as well as to Denmark, and had got that heritage after Hardacanute, in consequence of a regular agreement?"

The king replied, "How came it that he did not get it, if he had a right to it?"

"Why," replied the earl, "hast thou not Denmark, as King Magnus, thy predecessor, had it?"

The king replies, "The Danes have nothing to brag of over us Northmen; for many a place have we laid in ashes to thy relations."

Then said the earl, "If thou wilt not tell me, I will tell thee. Magnus subdued Denmark, because all the chiefs of the country helped him; and thou hast not done it, because all the people of the country were against thee. Therefore, also, King Magnus did not strive for England, because all the nation would have Edward for king. Wilt

thou take England now? I will bring the matter so far that most of the principal men in England shall be thy friends, and assist thee; for nothing is wanting to place me at the side of my brother Harald but the king's name. All men allow that there never was such a warrior in the northern lands as thou art; and it appears to me extraordinary that thou hast been fighting for fifteen years for Denmark, and wilt not take England that lies open to thee."

King Harald weighed carefully the earl's words, and perceived at once that there was truth in much of what he said; and he himself had also a great desire to acquire dominions. Then King Harald and the earl talked long and frequently together; and at last he took the resolution to proceed in summer to England, and conquer the country. King Harald sent a message-token through all Norway and ordered out a levy of one-half of all the men in Norway able to carry arms. When this became generally known, there were many guesses about what might be the end of this expedition. Some reckoned up King Harald's great achievements, and thought he was also the man who could accomplish this. Others, again, said that England was difficult to attack; that it was very full of people; and the men-at-arms, who were called Thingmen, were so brave, that one of them was better than two of Harald's best men. Then said Ulf the marshal:—

"I am still ready gold to gain;
But truly it would be in vain,
And the king's marshal in the hall
Might leave his good post once for all,
If two of us in any strife
Must from one Thingman fly for life.
My lovely Norse maid, in my youth
We thought the opposite the truth."

Ulf the marshal died that spring (1066). King Harald

stood over his grave, and said, as he was leaving it, "There lies now the truest of men, and the most devoted to his king."

Earl Toste sailed in spring west to Flanders, to meet the people who had left England with him, and others besides who had gathered to him both out of England and Flanders.

83.—GYRD'S DREAMS.

King Harald's fleet assembled at the Solunds. When King Harald was ready to leave Nidaros he went to King Olaf's shrine, unlocked it, clipped his hair and nails, and locked the shrine again, and threw the keys into the Nid. Some say he threw them overboard outside of Agdanes; and since then the shrine of Saint Olaf, the king, has never been opened. Thirty-five years had passed since he was slain; and he lived thirty-five years here on earth (1030-1066). King Harald sailed with his ships he had about him to the south to meet his people, and a great fleet was collected; so that, according to the people's reckoning, King Harald had nearly 200 ships beside provision-ships and small craft.

While they lay at the Solunds a man called Gyrd, on board the king's ship, had a dream. He thought he was standing in the king's ship and saw a great witch-wife standing on the island, with a fork in one hand and a trough in the other. He thought also that he saw over all the fleet, and that a fowl was sitting upon every ship's stern, and that these fowls were all ravens or ernes; and the witch-wife sang this song: —

"From the east I'll 'tice the king,
To the west the king I'll bring;
Many a noble bone will be
In battle left for me.

Ravens o'er Giuke's ship are flitting,
Eyeing the prey they think most fitting.
Upon the stem I'll sail with them!
Upon the stem I'll sail with them!"

84.—THORD'S DREAM.

There was also a man called Thord, in a ship which lay not far from the king's. He dreamt one night that he saw King Harald's fleet coming to land, and he knew the land to be England. He saw a great battle-array on the land; and he thought both sides began to fight, and had many banners flapping in the air. And before the army of the people of the country was riding a huge witch-wife upon a wolf; and the wolf had a man's carcass in his mouth, and the blood was dropping from his jaws; and when he had eaten up one body she threw another into his mouth, and so one after another, and he swallowed them all. And she sang thus:—

"Skade's eagle eyes
The king's ill luck espies:
Though glancing shields
Hide the green fields,
The king's ill luck she spies.

To bode the doom of this great king,
The flesh of bleeding men I fling
To hairy jaw and hungry maw!
To hairy jaw and hungry maw!"

85.—KING HARALD'S DREAM.

King Harald also dreamt one night that he was in Nidaros, and met his brother, King Olaf, who sang to him these verses:—

"In many a fight
My name was bright;
Men weep, and tell
How Olaf fell.

Thy death is near;
Thy corpse, I fear,
The crow will feed,
The witch-wife's steed."

Many other dreams and forebodings were then told of, and most of them gloomy. Before King Harald left Throndhjem, he let his son Magnus be proclaimed king,

and set him as king over Norway while he was absent. Thora, the daughter of Thorberg, also remained behind; but he took with him Queen Ellisif and her two daughters, Maria and Ingegerd. Olaf, King Harald's son, also accompanied his father abroad.

86.—BATTLE AT SCARBOROUGH.

When King Harald was clear for sea, and the wind became favourable, he sailed out into the ocean; and he himself landed in Shetland, but a part of his fleet in the Orkney Islands. King Harald stopped but a short time in Shetland before sailing to Orkney, from whence he took with him a great armed force, and the earls Paul and Erlend, the sons of Earl Thorfin; but he left behind him here the Queen Ellisif, and her daughters Maria and Ingegerd. Then he sailed, leaving Scotland and England westward of him, and landed at a place called Klifland. There he went on shore and plundered, and brought the country in subjection to him without opposition. Then he brought up at Skardaburg, and fought with the people of the place. He went up a hill which is there, and made a great pile upon it, which he set on fire; and when the pile was in clear flame, his men took large forks and pitched the burning wood down into the town, so that one house caught fire after the other, and the town surrendered. The Northmen killed many people there and took all the booty they could lay hold of. There was nothing left for the Englishmen now, if they would preserve their lives, but to submit to King Harald; and thus he subdued the country wherever he came. Then the king

proceeded south along the land, and brought up at Hellornes, where there came a force that had been assembled to oppose him, with which he had a battle, and gained the victory.

87.—OF HARALD'S ORDER OF BATTLE.

Thereafter the king sailed to the Humber, and up along the river, and then he landed. Up in Jorvik were two earls, Earl Morukare, and his brother, Earl Valthiof, and they had an immense army. While the army of the earls was coming down from the upper part of the country, King Harald lay in the Usa. King Harald now went on the land, and drew up his men. The one arm of this line stood at the outer edge of the river, the other turned up towards the land along a ditch; and there was also a morass, deep, broad, and full of water. The earls let their army proceed slowly down along the river, with all their troops in line. The king's banner was next the river, where the line was thickest. It was thinnest at the ditch, where also the weakest of the men were. When the earls advanced downwards along the ditch, the arm of the Northmen's line which was at the ditch gave way; and the Englishmen followed, thinking the Northmen would fly. The banner of Earl Morukare advanced then bravely.

88.—THE BATTLE AT THE HUMBER.

When King Harald saw that the English array had come to the ditch against him, he ordered the charge to be sounded, and urged on his men. He ordered the ban-

ner which was called the Land-ravager to be carried before him, and made so severe an assault that all had to give way before it; and there was a great loss among the men of the earls, and they soon broke into flight, some running up the river, some down, and the most leaping into the ditch, which was so filled with dead that the Norsemen could go dry-foot over the fen. There Earl Morukare fell. So says Stein Herdison:—

"The gallant Harald drove along,
Flying but fighting, the whole throng.
At last, confused, they could not fight,
And the whole body took to flight.
Up from the river's silent stream
At once rose desperate splash and scream;
But they who stood like men this fray
Round Morukare's body lay."

This song was composed by Stein Herdison about Olaf, son of King Harald; and he speaks of Olaf being in this battle with King Harald, his father. These things are also spoken of in the song called "Harald's Stave:"—

"Earl Valthiof's men
Lay in the fen,
By sword down hewed,
So thickly strewed,
That Norseman say
They paved a way
Across the fen
For the brave Norsemen."

Earl Valthiof, and the people who escaped, fled up to the castle of York; and there the greatest loss of men had been. This battle took place upon the Wednesday next Mathias' day (1066).

89.—OF EARL TOSTE.

Earl Toste had come from Flanders to King Harald as soon as he arrived in England, and the earl was present at all these battles. It happened, as he had foretold the king at their first meeting, that in England many people would flock to them, as being friends and relations of Earl

Toste, and thus the king's forces were much strengthened. After the battle now told of, all people in the nearest districts submitted to Harald, but some fled. Then the king advanced to take the castle, and laid his army at Stanforda-bryggiur; and as King Harald had gained so great a victory against so great chiefs and so great an army, the people were dismayed, and doubted if they could make any opposition. The men of the castle therefore determined, in a council, to send a message to King Harald, and deliver up the castle into his power. All this was soon settled; so that on Sunday the king proceeded with the whole army to the castle, and appointed a Thing of the people without the castle, at which the people of the castle were to be present. At this Thing all the people accepted the condition of submitting to Harald, and gave him, as hostages, the children of the most considerable persons; for Earl Toste was well acquainted with all the people of that town. In the evening the king returned down to his ships, after this victory achieved with his own force, and was very merry. A Thing was appointed within the castle early on Monday morning, and then King Harald was to name officers to rule over the town, to give out laws, and bestow fiefs. The same evening, after sunset, King Harald Godwinson came from the south to the castle with a numerous army, and rode into the city with the good-will and consent of the people of the castle. All the gates and walls were beset so that the Northmen could receive no intelligence, and the army remained all night in the town.

90.—OF KING HARALD'S LANDING.

On Monday, when King Harald Sigurdson had taken breakfast, he ordered the trumpets to sound for going on shore. The army accordingly got ready, and he divided the men into the parties who should go, and who should stay behind. In every division he allowed two men to land, and one to remain behind. Earl Toste and his retinue prepared to land with King Harald; and, for watching the ships, remained behind the king's son Olaf; the earls of Orkney, Paul and Erlend; and also Eystein Orre, a son of Thorberg Arnason, who was the most able and best beloved by the king of all the lendermen, and to whom the king had promised his daughter Maria. The weather was uncommonly fine, and it was hot sunshine. The men therefore laid aside their armour, and went on the land only with their shields, helmets and spears, and girt with swords; and many had also arrows and bows, and all were very merry. Now as they came near the castle a great army seemed coming against them, and they saw a cloud of dust as from horses' feet, and under it shining shields and bright armour. The king halted his people, and called to him Earl Toste, and asked him what army this could be. The earl replied that he thought it most likely to be a hostle army, but possibly it might be some of his relations who were seeking for mercy and friendship, in order to obtain certain peace and safety from the king. Then the king said, "We must all halt, to discover what kind of a force this is." They did so; and the nearer this force came the greater it appeared, and their shining arms were to the sight like glancing ice.

91.—OF EARL TOSTE'S COUNSEL.

Then said King Harald, "Let us now fall upon some good sensible counsel; for it is not to be concealed that this is an hostile army and the king himself without doubt is here."

Then said the earl, "The first counsel is to turn about as fast as we can to our ships to get our men and our weapons, and then we will make a defence according to our ability; or otherwise let our ships defend us, for there these horsemen have no power over us."

Then King Harald said, "I have another counsel. Put three of our best horses under three of our briskest lads and let them ride with all speed to tell our people to come quickly to our relief. The Englishmen shall have a hard fray of it before we give ourselves up for lost."

The earl said the king must order in this, as in all things, as he thought best; adding, at the same time, it was by no means his wish to fly. Then King Harald ordered his banner Land-ravager to be set up; and Frirek was the name of him who bore the banner.

92.—OF KING HARALD'S ARRAY.

Then King Harald arranged his army, and made the line of battle long, but not deep. He bent both wings of it back, so that they met together; and formed a wide ring equally thick all round, shield to shield, both in the front and rear ranks. The king himself and his retinue were within the circle: and there was the banner, and a body of chosen men. Earl Toste, with his retinue, was at another place, and had a different banner. The army

was arranged in this way, because the king knew that horsemen were accustomed to ride forwards with great vigour, but to turn back immediately. Now the king ordered that his own and the earl's attendants should ride forwards where it was most required. "And our bowmen," said he, "shall be near to us; and they who stand in the first rank shall set the spear-shaft on the ground, and the spear-point against the horseman's breast, if he rides at them; and those who stand in the second rank shall set the spear-point against the horse's breast."

93.—OF KING HARALD GODWINSON.

King Harald Godwinson had come with an immense army, both of cavalry and infantry. Now King Harald Sigurdson rode around his array, to see how every part was drawn up. He was upon a black horse, and the horse stumbled under him, so that the king fell off. He got up in haste and said, "A fall is lucky for a traveller."

The English king Harald said to the Northmen who were with him, "Do ye know the stout man who fell from his horse, with the blue kirtle and the beautiful helmet?"

"That is the king himself," said they.

The English king said, "A great man, and of stately appearance is he; but I think his luck has left him."

94.—OF THE TROOP OF THE NOBILITY.

Twenty horsemen rode forward from the Thing-men's troops against the Northmen's array; and all of them, and likewise their horses, were clothed in armour.

One of the horsemen said, "Is Earl Toste in this army?"

The earl answered, "It is not to be denied that ye will find him here."

The horseman says, "Thy brother, King Harald, sends thee salutation, with the message that thou shalt have the whole of Northumberland; and rather than thou shouldst not submit to him, he will give thee the third part of his kingdom to rule over along with himself."

The earl replies, "This is something different from the enmity and scorn he offered last winter; and if this had been offered then it would have saved many a man's life who now is dead, and it would have been better for the kingdom of England. But if I accept of this offer, what will he give King Harald Sigurdson for his trouble?"

The horseman replied, "He has also spoken of this: and will give him seven feet of English ground, or as much more as he may be taller than other men."

"Then," said the earl, "go now and tell King Harald to get ready for battle; for never shall the Northmen say with truth that Earl Toste left King Harald Sigurdson to join his enemy's troops, when he came to fight west here in England. We shall rather all take the resolution to die with honour, or to gain England by a victory."

Then the horseman rode back.

King Harald Sigurdson said to the earl, "Who was the man who spoke so well?"

The earl replied, "That was King Harald Godwinson."

Then, said King Harald Sigurdson, "That was by far too long concealed from me; for they had come so near to our army, that this Harald should never have carried back the tidings of our men's slaughter."

Then said the earl, "It was certainly imprudent for such chiefs, and it may be as you say; but I saw he was going to offer me peace and a great dominion, and that, on the other hand, I would be his murderer if I betrayed him; and I would rather he should be my murderer than I his, if one of two be to die."

King Harald Sigurdson observed to his men, "That was but a little man, yet he sat firmly in his stirrups."

It is said that Harald made these verses at this time:—

Advance! advance!
No helmets glance,
But blue swords play
In our array.

Advance! advance!
No mail-coats glance,
But hearts are here
That ne'er knew fear."

His coat of mail was called Emma; and it was so long that it reached almost to the middle of his leg, and so strong that no weapon ever pierced it. Then said King Harald Sigurdson, "These verses are but ill composed; I must try to make better;" and he composed the following:—

"In battle storm we seek no lee,
With skulking head, and bending knee,
Behind the hollow shield.

With eye and hand we fend the head;
Courage and skill stand in the stead
Of panzer, helm, and shield,
In Hild's bloody field,"

Thereupon Thiodolf sang:—

"And should our king in battle fall,—
A fate that God may give to all,—
His sons will vengeance take;

And never shone the sun upon
Two nobler eaglets in his run,
And them we'll ne'er forsake."

95.—OF THE BEGINNING OF THE BATTLE.

Now the battle began. The Englishmen made a hot assault upon the Northmen, who sustained it bravely. It was no easy matter for the English to ride against the Northmen on account of their spears; therefore they rode

in a circle around them. And the fight at first was but loose and light, as long as the Northmen kept their order of battle; for although the English rode hard against the Northmen, they gave way again immediately, as they could do nothing against them. Now when the Northmen thought they perceived that the enemy were making but weak assaults, they set after them, and would drive them into flight; but when they had broken their shield-rampart the Englishmen rode up from all sides, and threw arrows and spears on them. Now when King Harald Sigurdson saw this, he went into the fray where the greatest crash of weapons was; and there was a sharp conflict, in which many people fell on both sides. King Harald then was in a rage, and ran out in front of the array, and hewed down with both hands; so that neither helmet nor armour could withstand him, and all who were nearest gave way before him. It was then very near with the English that they had taken to flight. So says Arnor, the earls' skald:—

"Where battle-storm was ringing,
Where arrow-cloud was singing,
Harald stood there,
Of armour bare,
His deadly sword still swinging.
The foeman feel its bite;
His Norsemen rush to fight,
Danger to share
With Harald there,
Where steel on steel was ringing."

96.—FALL OF KING HARALD.

King Harald Sigurdson was hit by an arrow in the windpipe, and that was his death-wound. He fell, and all who had advanced with him, except those who retired with the banner. There was afterwards the warmest conflict, and Earl Toste had taken charge of the king's banner. They began on both sides to form their array again,

and for a long time there was a pause in fighting. Then Thiodolf sang these verses:—

"The army stands in hushed dismay;
Stilled is the clamour of the fray.
Harald is dead, and with him goes
The spirit to withstand our foes.
A bloody scat the folk must pay
For their king's folly on this day.
He fell; and now, without disguise,
We say this business was not wise."

But before the battle began again Harald Godwinson offered his brother, Earl Toste, peace, and also quarter to the Northmen who were still alive; but the Northmen called out, all of them together, that they would rather fall, one across the other, than accept of quarter from the Englishmen. Then each side set up a war-shout, and the battle began again. So says Arnor, the earls' skald:—

"The king, whose name would ill-doers scare,
The gold-tipped arrow would not spare.
Unhelmed, unpanzered, without shield,
He fell among us in the field.
The gallant men who saw him fall
Would take no quarter; one and all
Resolved to die with their loved king,
Around his corpse in a corpse-ring."

97.—SKIRMISH OF ORRE.

Eystein Orre came up at this moment from the ships with the men who followed him, and all were clad in armour. Then Eystein got King Harald's banner Land-ravager; and now was, for the third time, one of the sharpest of conflicts, in which many Englishmen fell, and they were near to taking flight. This conflict is called Orre's storm. Eystein and his men had hastened so fast from the ships that they were quite exhausted, and scarcely fit to fight before they came into the battle; but afterwards they became so furious, that they did not guard themselves with their shields as long as they could stand upright. At last they threw off their coats of ring-mail, and then the Englishmen could easily lay their blows

at them; and many fell from weariness, and died without a wound. Thus almost all the chief men fell among the Norway people. This happened towards evening; and then it went, as one might expect, that all had not the same fate, for many fled, and were lucky enough to escape in various ways; and darkness fell before the slaughter was altogether ended.

98.—OF STYRKAR THE MARSHAL.

Styrkar, King Harald Sigurdson's marshal, a gallant man, escaped upon a horse, on which he rode away in the evening. It was blowing a cold wind, and Styrkar had not much other clothing upon him but his shirt, and had a helmet on his head, and a drawn sword in his hand. As soon as his weariness was over, he began to feel cold. A waggoner met him in a lined skin-coat. Styrkar asks him, "Wilt thou sell thy coat, friend?"

"Not to thee," says the peasant: "thou art a Northman; that I can hear by thy tongue."

Styrkar replies, "If I were a Northman, what wouldst thou do?"

"I would kill thee," replied the peasant; "but as ill luck would have it, I have no weapon just now by me that would do it."

Then Styrkar says, "As you can't kill me, friend, I shall try if I can't kill you." And with that he swung his sword, and struck him on the neck, so that his head came off. He then took the skin-coat, sprang on his horse, and rode down to the strand.

Olaf Haraldson had not gone on land with the others,

and when he heard of his father's fall he made ready to sail away with the men who remained.

99.—OF WILLIAM THE BASTARD.

When the Earl of Rouen, William the Bastard, heard of his relation, King Edward's, death, and also that Harald Godwinson was chosen, crowned, and consecrated king of England, it appeared to him that he had a better right to the kingdom of England than Harald, by reason of the relationship between him and King Edward. He thought, also, that he had grounds for avenging the affront that Harald had put upon him with respect to his daughter. From all these grounds William gathered together a great army in Normandy, and had many men, and sufficient transport-shipping. The day that he rode out of the castle to his ships, and had mounted his horse, his wife came to him, and wanted to speak with him; but when he saw her he struck at her with his heel, and set his spurs so deep into her breast that she fell down dead; and the earl rode on to his ships, and went with his ships over to England. His brother, Archbishop Otto, was with him; and when the earl came to England he began to plunder, and take possession of the land as he came along. Earl William was stouter and stronger than other men; a great horseman and warrior, but somewhat stern; and a very sensible man, but not considered a man to be relied on.

100.—FALL OF KING HARALD GODWINSON.

King Harald Godwinson gave King Harald Sigurdson's

son Olaf leave to go away, with the men who had followed him and had not fallen in battle; but he himself turned round with his army to go south, for he had heard that William the Bastard was overwhelming the south of England with a vast army, and was subduing the country for himself. With King Harald went his brothers Svein and Gyrd, and Earl Valthiof. King Harald and Earl William met each other south in England at Helsingja-port. There was a great battle in which King Harald and his brother Earl Gyrd and a great part of his men fell. This was the nineteenth day after the fall of King Harald Sigurdson. Harald's brother, Earl Valthiof, escaped by flight, and towards evening fell in with a division of William's people, consisting of 100 men; and when they saw Earl Valthiof's troop they fled to a wood. Earl Valthiof set fire to the wood, and they were all burnt. So says Thorkel Skallason in Valthiof's ballad:—

"Earl Valthiof the brave
His foes a warming gave:
Within the blazing grove
A hundred men he drove.

The wolf will soon return,
And the witch's horse will burn
Her sharp claws in the ash,
To taste the Frenchman's flesh."

101.—EARL VALTHIOF'S DEATH.

William was proclaimed king of England. He sent a message to Earl Valthiof that they should be reconciled, and gave him assurance of safety to come to the place of meeting. The earl set out with a few men; but when he came to a heath north of Kastala-bryggia, there met him two officers of King William, with many followers, who took him prisoner, put him in fetters, and afterwards he was beheaded; and the English call him a saint. Thorkel tells of this:—

"William came o'er the sea,
With bloody sword came he:
Cold heart and bloody hand
Now rule the English land.

Earl Valthiof he slew,—
Valthiof the brave and true.
Cold heart and bloody hand
Now rule the English land."

William was after this king of England for twenty-one years, and his descendants have been so ever since.

102.—OF OLAF HARALDSON'S EXPEDITION TO NORWAY.

Olaf, the son of King Harald Sigurdson, sailed with his fleet from England from Hrafnseyr, and came in autumn to the Orkney Isles, where the event had happened that Maria, a daughter of Harald Sigurdson, died a sudden death the very day and hour her father, King Harald, fell. Olaf remained there all winter; but the summer after he proceeded east to Norway, where he was proclaimed king along with his brother Magnus. Queen Ellisif came from the West, along with her stepson Olaf and her daughter Ingegerd. There came also with Olaf over the West sea Skule, a son of Earl Toste, and who since has been called the king's foster-son, and his brother Ketil Krok. Both were gallant men, of high family in England, and both were very intelligent; and the brothers were much beloved by King Olaf. Ketil Krok went north to Halogaland, where King Olaf procured him a good marriage, and from him are descended many great people. Skule, the king's foster-son, was a very clever man, and the handsomest man that could be seen. He was the commander of King Olaf's court-men, spoke at the Things[1] and took part in all the country affairs with the king. The king offered to give

[1]Another instance of the old Norse or Icelandic tongue having been generally known in a part of England.—L.

Skule whatever district in Norway he liked, with all the income and duties that belonged to the king in it. Skule thanked him very much for the offer, but said he would rather have something else from him. "For if there came a shift of kings," said he, "the gift might come to nothing. I would rather take some properties lying near to the merchant towns, where you, sire, usually take up your abode, and then I would enjoy your Yule-feasts." The king agreed to this ,and conferred on him lands eastward at Konungahella, Oslo, Tunsberg, Sarpsborg, Bergen, and north at Nidaros. These were nearly the best properties at each place, and have since descended to the family branches which came from Skule. King Olaf gave Skule his female relative, Gudrun, the daughter of Nefstein, in marriage. Her mother was Ingerid, a daughter of Sigurd Syr and Asta, King Olaf the Saint's mother. Ingerid was a sister of King Olaf the Saint and of King Harald. Skule and Gudrun's son was Asolf of Reine, who married Thora, a daughter of Skopte Ogmundson; Asolf's and Thora's son was Guthorm of Reine, father of Bard, and grandfather of King Inge and of Duke Skule.

103.—OF KING HARALD SIGURDSON.

One year after King Harald's fall his body was transported form England north to Nidaros, and was buried in Mary church, which he had built. It was a common observation that King Harald distinguished himself above all other men by wisdom and resources of mind; whether he had to take a resolution suddenly for himself and others, or after long deliberation. He was, also,

above all other men, bold, brave, and lucky, until his dying day, as above related; and bravery is half victory. So says Thiodolf:—

"Harald, who till his dying day
Came off the best in many a fray,
Had one good rule in battle-plain,
In Seeland and elsewhere, to gain—
That, be his foes' strength more or less,
Courage is always half success."

King Harald was a handsome man, of noble appearance; his hair and beard yellow. He had a short beard, and long mustaches. The one eyebrow was somewhat higher than the other. He had large hands[1] and feet; but these were well made. His height was five ells. He was stern and severe to his enemies, and avenged cruelly all opposition or misdeed. So says Thiodolf:—

"Severe alike to friends or foes,
Who dared his royal will oppose;
Severe in discipline to hold
His men-at-arms wild and bold;
Severe the bondes to repress;
Severe to punish all excess;
Severe was Harald—but we call
That just which was alike to all."

King Harald was most greedy of power, and of all distinction and honour. He was bountiful to the friends who suited him. So says Thiodolf:—

"I got from him, in sea-fight strong,
A mark of gold for my ship-song.
Merit in any way
He generously would pay."

King Harald was fifty years old when he fell. We have no particular account of his youth before he was fifteen years old, when he was with his brother, King Olaf, at the battle of Stiklestad. He lived thirty-five years after that, and in all that time was never free from care and war. King Harald never fled from battle, but often tried

[1]It is a singular physical circumstance, that in almost all the swords of those ages to be found in the collection of weapons in the Antiquarian Museum at Copenhagen, the handles indicate a size of hand very much smaller than the hands of modern people of any class or rank. No modern dandy, with the most delicate hands, would find room for his hand to grasp or wield with ease some of the swords of these Northmen.—L.

cunning ways to escape when he had to do with great superiority of forces. All the men who followed King Harald in battle or skirmish said that when he stood in great danger, or anything came suddenly upon him, he always took that course which all afterwards saw gave the best hope of a fortunate issue.

104.—KING HARALD AND KING OLAF COMPARED.

When Haldor, a son of Brynjolf Ulfalde the Old, who was a sensible man and a great chief, heard people talk of how unlike the brothers Saint Olaf and King Harald were in disposition, he used to say, "I was in great friendship with both the brothers, and I knew intimately the dispositions of both, and never did I know two men more like in disposition. Both were of the highest understanding, and bold in arms, and greedy of power and property; of great courage, but not acquainted with the way of winning the favour of the people; zealous in governing, and severe in their revenge. King Olaf forced the people into Christianity and good customs, and punished cruelly those who disobeyed. This just and rightful severity the chiefs of the country could not bear, but raised an army against him, and killed him in his own kingdom; and therefore he is held to be a saint. King Harald, again, marauded to obtain glory and power, forced all the people he could under his power, and died in another king's dominions. Both brothers, in daily life, were of a worthy and considerate manner of living; they were of great experience, and very laborious, and were known and celebrated far and wide for these qualities."

105.—KING MAGNUS'S DEATH.

King Magnus Haraldson ruled over Norway the first winter after King Harald's death (1067), and afterwards two years (1068-1069) along with his brother, King Olaf. Thus there were two kings of Norway at that time; and Magnus had the northern and Olaf the eastern part of the country. King Magnus had a son called Hakon, who was fostered by Thorer of Steig in Gudbrandsdal, who was a brother of King Magnus by the mother's side; and Hakon was a most agreeable man.

After King Harald Sigurdson's death the Danish king Svein let it be known that the peace between the Northmen and the Danes was at an end, and insisted that the league between Harald and Svein was not for longer time than their lives. There was a levy in both kingdoms. Harald's sons called out the whole people in Norway for procuring men and ships, and Svein set out from the south with the Danish army. Messengers then went between with proposals for a peace; and the Northmen said they would either have the same league as was concluded between King Harald and Svein, or otherwise give battle instantly on the spot. Verses were made on this occasion, viz.—

"Ready for war or peace,
King Olaf will not cease
From foeman's hand
To guard his land."

So says also Stein Herdison in his song of Olaf:—

"From Throndhjem town, where in repose
The holy king defies his foes,
Another Olaf will defend
His kingdom from the greedy Svein.
King Olaf has both power and right,
And the Saint's favour in the fight.
The Saint will ne'er his kin forsake,
And let Svein Ulfson Norway take."

In this manner friendship was concluded between the

kings and peace between the countries. King Magnus fell ill and died of the ringworm disease, after being ill for some time. He died and was buried at Nidaros. He was an amiable king and bewailed by the people.

SAGA OF OLAF KYRRE.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

SNORRE's account of Olaf Kyrre corresponds with the statements found in *Agrip*, *Fagrskinna*, and *Morkinskinna*.

There are but few events in Olaf's long reign, and hence he is very appropriately called the Quiet (Kyrre). As Hildebrand says, this saga seems to be written simply to fill out the empty space between Harald Hardrade and Magnus Barefoot.

Skalds quoted in this saga are: Stein Herdison and Stuf.

1.—OLAF'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

Olaf remained sole king of Norway after the death (1069) of his brother King Magnus. Olaf was a stout man, well grown in limbs; and every one said a handsomer man could not be seen, nor of a nobler appearance. His hair was yellow as silk, and became him well; his skin was white and fine over all his body; his eyes beautiful, and his limbs well proportioned. He was rather silent in general, and did not speak much even at Things; but he was merry in drinking parties. He loved drinking much, and was talkative enough then; but quite peaceful. He was cheerful in conversation, peacefully inclined during all his reign, and loving gentleness and moderation in all things. Stein Herdison speaks thus of him:—

"Our Throndhjem king is brave and wise,
His love of peace our bondes prize;
By friendly word and ready hand
He holds good peace through every land.
He is for all a lucky star;
England he frightens from a war;
The stiff-necked Danes he drives to peace;
Troubles by his good influence cease."

2.—OF KING OLAF'S MANNER OF LIVING.

It was the fashion in Norway in old times for the king's high-seat to be on the middle of a long bench, and the ale was handed across the fire;[1] but King Olaf had his high-seat made on a high bench across the room; he also first had chimney-places in the rooms, and the floors strewed both summer and winter. In King Olaf's time many merchant towns arose in Norway, and many new ones were founded. Thus King Olaf founded a merchant town at Bergen, where very soon many wealthy people settled themselves, and it was regularly frequented by merchants from foreign lands. He had the foundations laid for the large Christ church, which was to be a stone church; but in his time there was little done to it. Besides, he completed the old Christ church, which was of wood. King Olaf also had a great feasting-house built in Nidaros, and in many other merchant towns, where before there were only private feasts; and in his time no one could drink in Norway but in these houses, adorned for the purpose with branches and leaves, and which stood under the king's protection. The great guild-bell in Throndhjem, which was called the pride of the town, tolled to call together to these guilds. The guild-brethren built Margaret's church in Nidaros of stone. In King Olaf's time there were general entertainments and hand-in-hand feasts. At this time also much unusual splendour and foreign customs and fashions in the cut of clothes

[1]We may understand the arrangement by supposing the fire in the middle of the room, the smoke escaping by a hole in the roof, and a long bench on each side of the fire; one bench occupied by the high-seat of the king and great guests, the other by the rest of the guests; and the cup handed across the fire, which appears to have had a religious meaning previous to the introduction of Christianity.—L.

were introduced; as, for instance, costly hose plaited about the legs. Some had gold rings about the legs, and also used coats which had lists down the sides, and arms five ells long, and so narrow that they must be drawn up with ties, and lay in folds all the way up to the shoulders. The shoes were high, and all edged with silk, or even with gold. Many other kinds of wonderful ornaments were used at that time.

3.—FASHION OF KING OLAF'S COURT.

King Olaf used the fashion, which was introduced from the courts of foreign kings, of letting his grand-butler stand at the end of the table, and fill the table-cups for himself and the other distinguished guests who sat at the table. He had also torchbearers, who held as many candles at the table as there were guests of distinction present. There was also a marshal's bench outside of the table-circle, where the marshal and other persons of distinction sat with their faces towards the high-seat. King Harald, and the kings before him, used to drink out of a deer-horn; and the ale was handed from the high-seat to the other side over the fire, and he drank to the memory of any one he thought of. So says Stuf the skald:—

"He who in battle is the first,
And now in peace is best to trust,
A welcome, hearty and sincere,
Gave to me on my coming here.

He whom the ravens watch with care,
He who the gold rings does not spare,
A golden horn full to the brink
Gave me himself at Haug to drink."

4.—ARRANGEMENT OF KING OLAF'S COURT.

King Olaf had 120 courtmen-at-arms, and 60 pursuivants, besides 60 house-servants, who provided what was wanted for the king's house wherever it might be, or did

other work required for the king. When the bondes asked why he kept a greater retinue than the law allowed, or former kings kept when they went in guest-quarters or feasts which the bondes had to provide for them, the king answered, "It does not happen that I rule the kingdom better, or produce greater respect for me than ye had for my father, although I have one-half more people than he had. I do not by any means do it merely to plague you, or to make your condition harder than formerly."

5.—KING SVEIN ULFSON'S DEATH.

King Svein Ulfson died ten years after the fall of both the Haralds (1076). After him his son, Harald Hein, was king for three years (1077-1080); then Canute the Holy for seven years (1081-1087); afterwards Olaf, King Svein's third son, for eight years (1088-1095). Then Eirik the Good, Svein's fourth son, for eight winters (1096-1103.) Olaf, the king of Norway, was married to Ingerid, a daughter of Svein, the Danish king; and Olaf, the Danish King Svein's son, married Ingegerd, a daughter of King Harald, and sister of King Olaf of Norway. King Olaf Haraldson, who was called by some Olaf Kyrre, but by many Olaf the Bonde, had a son by Thora, Joan's daughter, who was called Magnus, and was one of the handsomest lads that could be seen, and was promising in every respect. He was brought up in the king's court.

6.—MIRACLES OF KING OLAF THE SAINT.

King Olaf had a church of stone built in Nidaros, on

the spot where King Olaf's body had first been buried; and the altar was placed directly over the spot where the king's grave had been. This church was consecrated and called Christ Church; and King Olaf's shrine was removed to it, and was placed before the altar, and many miracles took place there. The following summer, on the same day of the year as the church was consecrated, which was the day before Olafsmas, there was a great assemblage of people, and then a blind man was restored to sight. And on the mass-day itself, when the shrine and the holy relics were taken out and carried, and the shrine itself, according to custom, was taken and set down in the churchyard, a man who had long been dumb recovered his speech again, and sang with flowing tongue praise-hymns to God, and to the honour of King Olaf the Saint. The third miracle was of a woman who had come from Svithjod, and had suffered much distress on this pilgrimage from her blindness; but trusting in God's mercy, had come travelling to this solemnity. She was led blind into the church to hear mass this day; but before the service was ended she saw with both eyes, and got her sight fully and clearly, although she had been blind fourteen years. She returned with great joy, praising God and King Olaf the Saint.

7.—OF THE SHRINE OF KING OLAF THE SAINT.

There happened a circumstance in Nidaros, when King Olaf's coffin was being carried about through the streets, that it became so heavy that people could not lift it from the spot. Now when the coffin was set down, the street

was broken up to see what was under it at that spot, and the body of a child was found which had been murdered and concealed there. The body was carried away, the street put in order again as it had been before, and the shrine carried on according to custom.

8.—KING OLAF WAS BLESSED WITH PEACE.

In the days of King Olaf there were bountiful harvests in Norway and many good things. In no man's life had times been so good in Norway since the days of Harald Harfager. King Olaf modified for the better many a matter that his father had inaugurated and maintained with severity. He was generous, but a strict ruler, for he was a wise man, and well understood what was of advantage to the kingdom. There are many stories of his good works. How much he loved and how kind he was to the people may be seen from the following words, which he once spoke at a large banquet. He was happy and in the best of spirits, when one of his men said, "It pleases us, sire, to see you so happy." He answered: "I have reason to be glad when I see my subjects sitting happy and free in a guild consecrated to my uncle, the sainted King Olaf. In the days of my father these people were subjected to much terror and fear; the most of them concealed their gold and their precious things, but now I see glittering on his person what each one owns, and your freedom is my gladness." In his reign there was no strife, and he protected himself and his realm against enemies abroad; and his nearest neighbours stood in great awe of him, although he was a most gentle man, as is confirmed by the skald.

9.—MEETING OF OLAF KYRRE AND CANUTE THE SAINT.

King Olaf Kyrre was a great friend of his brother-in-law, the Danish king, Canute the holy. They appointed a meeting and met at the Gaut river at Konungahella, where the kings used to have their meetings. There King Canute made the proposal that they should send an army westward to England on account of the revenge they had to take there! first and foremost King Olaf himself, and also the Danish king. "Do one of two things," said King Canute,—"either take sixty ships, which I will furnish thee with, and be thou the leader; or give me sixty ships, and I shall be the leader." Then said King Olaf, "This speech of thine, King Canute, is altogether according to my mind; but there is this great difference between us; your family has had more luck in conquering England with great glory, and, among others, King Canute the Great; and it is likely that this good fortune follows your race. On the other hand, when King Harald, my father, went westward to England, he got his death there; and at that time the best men in Norway followed him. But Norway was so emptied then of chosen men, that such men have not since been to find in the country; for that expedition there was the most excellent outfit, and you know what was the end of it. Now I know my own capacity, and how little I am suited to be the leader; so I would rather you should go, with my help and assistance."

So King Olaf gave Canute sixty large ships, with excellent equipment and faithful men, and set his lendermen as chiefs over them; and all must allow that this arma-

ment was admirably equipt. It is also told in the saga about Canute, that the Northmen alone did not break the levy when the army was assembled, but the Danes would not obey their king's orders. This king Canute acknowledged, and gave them leave to trade in merchandise where they pleased through his country, and at the same time sent the king of Norway costly presents for his assistance. On the other hand he was enraged against the Danes, and laid heavy fines upon them.

10.—A BONDE WHO UNDERSTOOD THE LANGUAGE OF BIRDS.

One summer, when King Olaf's men had gone round the country collecting his income and land dues, it happened that the king, on their return home asked them where on their expedition they had been best entertained. They said it was in the house of a bonde in one of the king's districts. "There is an old bonde there who knows many things before they happen. We asked him about many things, which he explained to us; nay, we even believe that he understands perfectly the language of birds." The king replies, "How can ye believe such nonsense?" and insisted that it was wrong to put confidence in such things. It happened soon after that the king was sailing along the coast; and as they sailed through a Sound the king said, "What is that township up in the country?"

They replied, "That is the district, sire, where we told you we were best entertained."

Then said the king, "What house is that which stands up there, not far from the Sound?"

They replied, "That house belongs to the wise old bonde we told you of, sire."

They saw now a horse standing close to the house. Then said the king, "Go there, and take that horse, and kill him."

They replied, "We would not like to do him such harm."

The king: "I will command. Cut off the horse's head; but take care of yourselves that ye let no blood come to the ground, and bear the horse out to my ship. Go then and bring to me the old man; but tell him nothing of what has happened, as ye shall answer for it with your lives."

They did as they were ordered, and then came to the old man, and told him the king's message. When he came before the king, the king asked him, "Who owns the house thou art dwelling in?"

He replies, "Sire, you own it, and take rent for it."

The king: "Show us the way round the ness, for here thou must be a good pilot."

The old man went into his boat and rowed before the king's ship; and when he had rowed a little way a crow came flying over the ship, and croaking hideously. The peasant listens to the crow. The king said, "Do you think, bonde, that betokens anything?"

"Sire, that is certain," said he.

Then another crow flies over the ship, and screeches dreadfully. The bonde was so ill hearing this that he could not row, and the oars hung loose in his hands.

Then said the king, "Thy mind is turned much to these crows, bonde, and to what they say."

The bonde replies, "Now I suspect it is true what they say."

The third time the crow came flying screeching at its very worst, and almost settling on the ship. Now the bonde threw down his oars, regarded them no more, and stood up before the king.

Then the king said, "Thou art taking this much to heart, bonde; what is it they say?"

The peasant: "It is likely that either they or I have misunderstood"——

"Say on," replied the king.

The bonde replied in a song:—

"The 'one-year old'
Mere nonsense told;
The two-years' chatter
Seemed senseless matter;
The three-years' croak
Of wonders spoke.
The foul bird said
My old mare's head
I row along;
And, in her song,
She said the thief
Was the land's chief."

The king said, "What is this, bonde! Wilt thou call me a thief?"

Then the king gave him good presents, and remitted all the land-rent of the place he lived on. So says Stein:—

"The pillar of our royal race
Stands forth adorned with every grace.
What king before e'er took such pride
To scatter bounty far and wide?
To one he gives the ship of war,
Hung round with shields that gleam afar;
The merchant ship on one bestows,
With painted streaks in glowing rows.

"The man-at-arms a golden ring
Boasts as the present of his king;
At the king's table sits the guest,
By the king's bounty richly drest.
King Olaf, Norway's royal son,
Who from the English glory won,
Pours out with ready-giving hand
His wealth on children of the land.

"Brave clothes to servants he awards,
Helms and ring-mail coats grace his guards;
Or axe and sword Har's warriors gain,
And heavy armour for the plain.
Gold, too, for service duly paid,
Red gold all pure, and duly weighed,
King Olaf gives—he loves to pay
All service in a royal way."

11.—OF KING OLAF KYRRE'S DEATH.

King Olaf lived principally in his domains on his large farms. Once when he was east in Ranrike, on his estate of Haukby, he took the disease which ended in his death. He had then been king of Norway for twenty-six years (1068-1093); for he was made king of Norway the year after King Harald's death. King Olaf's body was taken north to Nidaros, and buried in Christ church, which he himself had built there. He was the most amiable king of his time, and Norway was much improved in riches and cultivation during his reign.

MAGNUS BAREFOOT'S SAGA.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE greater part of the contents of this saga is also found in *Agrip*, *Fagrskinna*, and *Morkinskinna*.

Magnus and his cousin Hakon became kings in 1093, but Hakon ruled only two years and died in 1095. King Magnus fell in the year 1103.

Skalds quoted are: Bjorn Krephende, Thorkel Hamarskald, and Eldjarn.

1.—BEGINNING OF THE REIGN OF KING MAGNUS AND HIS COUSIN HAKON.

Magnus, King Olaf's son, was, immediately after King Olaf's death, proclaimed at Viken king of all Norway; but the Upland people, on hearing of King Olaf's death, chose Hakon, Thorer's foster-son, a cousin of King Magnus, as king. Thereupon Hakon and Thorer went north to the Throndhjem country, and when they came to Nidaros they summoned the Eyrathing; and at that Thing Hakon desired the bondes to give him the kingly title, which was agreed to, and the Throndhjem people proclaimed him king of half of Norway, as his father, King Magnus, had been before. Hakon relieved the Throndhjem people of all harbour duties, and gave them many other privileges. He did away with Yule-gifts, and gained by this the good-will of all the Throndhjem people. Thereafter Hakon formed a court, and then pro-

ceeded to the Uplands, where he gave the Upland people the same privileges as the Throndhjem people; so that they also were perfectly well affected to him, and were his friends. The people in Throndhjem sang this ballad about him:—

"Young Hakon was the Norseman's pride,
And Steig-Thorer was on his side.
Young Hakon from the Upland came,
With royal birth, and blood, and name.

Young Hakon from the king demands
His royal birthright, half the lands;
Magnus will not the kingdom break,—
The whole or nothing he will take."

2.—HAKON'S DEATH.

King Magnus proceeded north to the merchant town (Nidaros), and on his arrival went straight to the king's house, and there took up his abode. He remained here the first part of the winter (1094), and kept seven longships in the open water of the river Nid, abreast of the king's house. Now when King Hakon heard that King Magnus was come to Throndhjem, he came from the East over the Dovrefield, and thence down from Throndhjem to the merchant town, where he took up his abode in the house of Skule, opposite to Clement's church, which had formerly been the king's house. King Magnus was ill pleased with the great gifts which Hakon had given to the bondes to gain their favour, and thought it was so much given out of his own property. This irritated his mind; and he thought he had suffered injustice from his relative in this respect, that he must now put up with less income than his father and his predecessors before him had enjoyed; and he gave Thorer the blame. When King Hakon and Thorer observed this, they were alarmed for what Magnus might do; and they thought it suspi-

cious that Magnus kept long-ships afloat rigged out, and with tents. The following spring, after Candlemas, King Magnus left the town in the night with his ships; the tents up, and lights burning in the tents. They brought up at Hefring, remained there all night, and kindled a fire on the land. Then Hakon and the men in the town thought some treachery was on foot, and he let the trumpets call all the men together out on the Eyrar, where the whole people of the town came to him, and the people were gathering together the whole night. When it was light in the morning, King Magnus saw the people from all districts gathered together on the Eyrar; and he sailed out of the fjord, and proceeded south to where the Gulathing is held. Hakon thanked the people for their support which they had given him, and got ready to travel east to Viken. But he first held a meeting in the town, where, in a speech, he asked the people for their friendship, promising them his; and added, that he had some suspicions of his relation, King Magnus's intentions. Then King Hakon mounted his horse, and was ready to travel. All men promised him their good-will and support whenever he required them, and the people followed him out to the foot of Steinbjorg. From thence King Hakon proceeded up the Dovrefield; but as he was going over the mountains he rode all day after a ptarmigan, which flew up beside him, and in this chase a sickness overfell him, which ended in his death; and he died on the mountains. His body was carried north, and came to the merchant town just half a month after he left it. The whole townspeople went to meet the body, sorrowing, and the most of

them weeping; for all people loved him with sincere affection. King Hakon's body was interred in Christ church, and Hakon and Magnus had ruled the country for two years. Hakon was a man full twenty-five years old, and was one of the chiefs the most beloved by all the people. He had made a journey to Bjarmaland, where he had given battle and gained a victory.

3.—OF A FORAY IN HALLAND.

King Magnus sailed in winter (1095) eastward to Viken; but when spring approached he went southwards to Halland, and plundered far and wide. He laid waste Viskardal and many other districts, and returned with a great booty back to his own kingdom. So says Bjorn Krephende in his song on Magnus:—

"Through Halland wide around
The clang and shriek resound;
The houses burn,
The people mourn,
Through Halland wide around.

The Norse king strides in flame,
Through Viskardal he came;
The fire sweeps,
The widow weeps,
The Norse king strides in flame."

Here it is told that King Magnus made the greatest devastation through Halland.

4.—OF THORER OF STEIG.

There was a man callen Svein, a son of Harald Fletter. He was a Danish man by family, a great viking and champion, and a very clever man, and of high birth in his own country. He had been some time with King Hakon Magnuson, and was very dear to him; but after King Hakon's decease Thorer of Steig, his foster-father, had no great confidence in any treaty or friendship with King

Magnus, if the whole country came into his power, on account of the position in which Thorer had stood to King Magnus, and the opposition he had made to him. Thereupon Thorer and Svein took counsel with each other, which they afterwards carried into effect,—to raise, with Thorer's assistance, and his men, a troop against Magnus. But as Thorer was old and heavy, Svein took the command, and name of leader of the troop. In this design several chiefs took part, among whom the principal was Egil Aslakson of Aurland. Egil was a lenderman, and married to Ingebjorg, a daughter of Ogmund Thorbergson, a sister of Skopte of Giske. The rich and powerful man, Skjalg Erlingson, also joined their party. Thorkel Hamarskald speaks of this in his ballad of Magnus:—

"Thorer and Egil were not wise,—
They aimed too high to win a prize:
There was no reason in their plan,
And it hurt many a udalman.

The stone, too great for them to throw,
Fell back, and hurt them with the blow;
And now the udalmen must rue
That to their friends they were so true."

Thorer and Svein collected a troop in the Uplands, and went down through Raumsdal into Sunmore, and there collected vessels, with which they afterwards sailed north to Throndhjem.

5.—OF THORER'S ADVENTURES.

The lenderman Sigurd Ulstreng, a son of Lodin Viggiarskalle, collected men by sending round the war-token, as soon as he heard of Thorer and the troop which followed him, and had a rendezvous with all the men he could raise at Viggia. Svein and Thorer also met there with their people, fought with Sigurd, and gained the vic-

tory after giving him a great defeat; and Sigurd fled, and joined King Magnus. Thorer and his followers proceeded to the town (Nidaros), and remained there some time in the fjord, where many people joined them. King Magnus hearing this news immediately collected an army, and proceeded north to Throndhjem. And when he came into the fjord Thorer and his party heard of it while they lay at Hefring, and they were ready to leave the fjord; and they rowed their ships to the strand at Vagnvik, and left them, and came into Theksdal in Seliuhverfe, and Thorer was carried in a litter over the mountains. Then they got hold of ships and sailed north to Halogaland. As soon as King Magnus was ready for sea, he sailed from Throndhjem in pursuit of them. Thorer and his party went north all the way to Bjarkey; and Jon, with his son Vidkun, fled from thence. Thorer and his men robbed all the movable goods, and burnt the house, and a good long-ship that belonged to Vidkun. While the hull was burning the vessel keeled to one side, and Thorer called out, "Hard to starboard, Vidkun!" Some verses were made about this burning in Bjarkey:—

"The sweetest farm that I have seen
Stood on Bjarkey's island green;
And now, where once this farm-house stood,
Fire crackles through a pile of wood;
And the clear red flame, burning high,
Flashes across the dark-night-sky.
Jon and Vidkun, this dark night,
Will not be wandering without light."

6.—DEATH OF THORER AND EGIL.

Jon and Vidkun travelled day and night till they met King Magnus. Svein and Thorer proceeded northwards with their men, and plundered far and wide in Halogaland. But while they lay in a fjord called Harm, Thorer

and his party saw King Magnus coming under sail towards them; and thinking they had not men enough to fight him, they rowed away and fled. Thorer and Egil brought up at Hesjutun; but Svein rowed out to sea, and some of their people rowed into the fjords. King Magnus pursued Thorer, and the vessels struck together while they were landing. Thorer stood in the forecastle of his ship, and Sigurd Ulstreng called out to him, and asked, "Art thou well, Thorer?" Thorer replied, "I am well in hands, but ill on my feet."

Then all Thorer's men fled up the country, and Thorer was taken prisoner. Egil was also taken prisoner, for he would not leave his wife. King Magnus then ordered both of them to be taken out to Vambarholm; and when they were leading Thorer from the ship he tottered on his legs. Then Vidkun called out, "More to the larboard, Thorer!" When he was being led to the gallows he sang:—

"We were four comrades gay,—
Let one by the helm stay."

When he came to the gallows he said, "Bad counsel comes to a bad end." Then Thorer was hanged; but when he was hoisted up the gallows tree he was so heavy that his neck gave way, and the body fell down to the ground; for Thorer was a man exceedingly stout, both high of stature and thick. Egil was also led to the gallows; and when the king's thralls were about hanging him he said, "Ye should not hang me, for in truth each of you deserves much more to be hanged." People sang these verses about it:—

"I hear, my girl, that Egil said,
When to the gallows he was led,
That the king's thralls far more than he
Deserved to hang on gallows-tree.
It might be so; but, death in view,
A man should to himself be true,—
End a stout life by death as stout,
Showing no fear, or care, or doubt."

King Magnus sat near while they were being hanged, and was in such a rage that none of his men was so bold as to ask mercy for them. The king said, when Egil was spinning at the gallows, "Thy great friends help thee but poorly in time of need." From this people supposed that the king only wanted to have been entreated to have spared Egil's life. Bjorn Krephende speaks of these things:—

"King Magnus in the robbers' gore
Dyed red his sword; and round the shore
The wolves howled out their wild delight,
At corpses swinging in their sight.
Have ye not heard how the king's sword
Punished the traitors to their lord?
How the king's thralls hung on the gallows
Old Thorer and his traitor-fellows?"

7.—OF THE PUNISHMENT OF THE THRONDHJEM PEOPLE.

After this King Magnus sailed south to Throndhjem, and brought up in the fjord, and punished severely all who had been guilty of treason towards him; killing some, and burning the houses of others. So says Bjorn Krephende:—

"He who despises fence of shields
Drove terror through the Throndhjem fields,
When all the land through which he came
Was swimming in a flood of flame.
The raven-feeder, well I know,
Cut off two chieftains at a blow;
The wolf could scarcely ravenous be,
The ernes flew round the gallows-tree."

Svein Harald Fletter's son, fled out to sea first, and sailed then to Denmark, and remained there; and at last came into great favour with King Eystein, the son of King Magnus, who took so great a liking to Svein that he made him his dish-bearer, and held him in great re-

spect. King Magnus had now alone the whole kingdom, and he kept good peace in the land, and rooted out all vikings and lawless men. He was a man quick, warlike, and able, and more like in all things to his grandfather, King Harald, in disposition and talents than to his father.

8.—OF THE BONDE SVEINKE, AND SIGURD ULSTRENG.

There was a man called Sveinke Steinarson, who was very wealthy, and dwelt in Viken at the Gaut river. He had brought up Hakon Magnuson before Thorer of Steig took him. Sveinke had not yet submitted to King Magnus. King Magnus ordered Sigurd Ulstreng to be called, and told him he would send him to Sveinke with the command that he should quit the king's land and domain. "He has not yet submitted to us, or shown us due honour." He added, that there were some lendermen east in Viken, namely Svein Bryggjufot, Dag Eilifson, and Kolbjorn Klakke, who could bring this matter into right bearing. Then Sigurd said, "I did not know there was the man in Norway against whom three lendermen besides myself were needful." The king replied, "Thou needst not take this help, unless it be necessary." Now Sigurd made himself ready for the journey with a ship, sailed east to Viken, and there summoned the lendermen to him. Then a Thing was appointed to Viken, to which the people were called who dwelt on the Gaut river, besides others; so that it was a numerous assembly. When the Thing was formed they had to wait for Sveinke. They soon after saw a troop of men coming along, so well furnished with weapons

that they looked like pieces of shining ice; and now came Sveinke and his people to the Thing, and set themselves down in a circle. All were clad in iron, with glowing arms, and 500 in number. Then Sigurd stood up, and spoke. "My master, King Magnus, sends God's salutation and his own to all friends, lendermen and others, his subjects in the kingdom; also to the powerful bondes, and the people in general, with kind words and offers of friendship; and to all who will obey him he offers his friendship and good will. Now the king will, with all cheerfulness and peace, show himsef a gracious master to all who will submit to him, and to all in his dominions. He will be the leader and defender of all the men of Norway; and it will be good for you to accept his gracious speech, and this offer."

Then stood up a man in the troop of the Elfgrims, who was of great stature and grim countenance, clad in a leather cloak, with a halberd on his shoulder, and a great steel hat upon his head. He looked sternly, and said, "Here is no need of wheels, says the fox, when he draws the trap over the ice." He said nothing more, but sat down again.

Soon after Sigurd Ulstreng stood up again, and spoke thus: "But little concern or help have we for the king's affairs from you, Elfgrims, and but little friendship; yet by such means every man shows how much he respects himself. But now I shall produce more clearly the king's errand." Thereupon he demanded land-dues and levy-dues, together with all other rights of the king, from the great bondes. He bade each of them to consider

with himself how they had conducted themselves in these matters; and that they should now promote their own honour, and do the king justice, if they had come short hitherto in doing so. And then he sat down.

Then the same man got up in the troop of Elfgrims who had spoken before, lifted his hat a little up, and said, "The lads run well, say the Laplanders, who have skates for nothing." Then he sat himself down again.

Soon after Sigurd arose, after speaking with the lendermen, and said that so weighty a message as the king's ought not to be treated lightly as a jest. He was now somewhat angry; and added, that they ought not to receive the king's message and errand so scornfully, for it was not decent. He was dressed in a red or scarlet coat, and had a blue coat over it. He cast off his upper coat and said, "Now it is come so far that every one must look to himself, and not loiter and jest with others; for by so doing every man will show what he is. We do not require now to be taught by others; for now we can see ourselves how much we are regarded. But this may be borne with; but not that ye treat so scornfully the king's message. Thereby every one shows how highly he considers himself. There is one man called Sveinke Steinarson, who lives east at the Gaut river; and from him the king will have his just land-dues, together with his own land, or will banish him from the country. It is of no use here to seek excuses, or to answer with sharp words; for people are to be found who are his equals in power, although he now receives our speech so unworthily; and it is better now than afterwards to return to the

right way, and do himself honour, rather than await disgrace for his obstinancy." He then sat down.

Sveinke then got up, threw back his steel-hat, and gave Sigurd many scornful words, and said, "Tut! tut! 'tis a shame for the dogs, says the proverb, when the fox is allowed to cast their excrements in the peasant's well. Here will be a miracle! Thou useless fellow! with a coat without arms, and a kirtle with skirts, wilt thou drive me out of the country? Thy relation, Sigurd Woolsack, was sent before on this errand, and one called Gille the Backthief, and one who had still a worse name. They were a night in every house, and stole wherever they came. Wilt thou drive me out of the country? Formerly thou wast not so mighty, and thy pride was less when King Hakon, my foster-son, was in life. Then thou wert as frightened for him when he met thee on the road as a mouse in a mouse-trap, and hid thyself under a heap of clothes, like a dog on board a ship. Thou wast thrust into a leather-bag like corn in a sack, and driven from house and farm like a year-old colt from the mares; and dost thou dare to drive me from the land? Thou shouldst rather think thyself lucky to escape from hence with life. Let us stand up and attack him."

Then all his men stood up, and made a great clash with their weapons. Then Svein Bryggjufot and the other lendermen saw there was no other chance for Sigurd but to get him on horseback, which was done, and he rode off into the forest. The end was that Sveinke returned home to his farm, and Sigurd Ulstreng came, with great difficulty, by land north to Throndhjem to King Mag-

nus, and told the result of his errand. "Did I not say," said the king, "that the help of my lendermen would be needed?" Sigurd was ill pleased with his journey; insisted that he would be revenged, cost what it will; and urged the king much. The king ordered five ships to be fitted out; and as soon as they were ready for sea he sailed south along the land, and then east to Viken, where he was entertained in excellent guest-quarters by his lendermen. The king told them he would seek out Sveinke. "For I will not conceal my suspicion that he thinks to make himself king of Norway." They said that Sveinke was both a powerful and an ungovernable man. Now the king went from Viken until he came to Sveinke's farm. Then the lendermen desired that they might be put on shore to see how matters stood; and when they came to the land they saw that Sveinke had already come down from the farm, and was on the road with a number of well-armed men. The lendermen held up a white shield in the air, as a peace-token; and when Sveinke saw it he halted his men, and they approached each other. Then said Kolbjorn Klakke, "King Magnus sends thee God's salutation and his own, and bids thee consider what becomes thee, and do him obedience, and not prepare thyself to give him battle." Kolbjorn offered to mediate peace between them, if he could, and told him to halt his troops.

Sveinke said he would wait for them where he was. "We came out to meet you," he said, "that ye might not tread down our corn-fields."

The lendermen returned to the king, and told him all was now at his pleasure.

The king said, "My doom is soon delivered. He shall fly the country, and never come back to Norway as long as the kingdom is mine; and he shall leave all his goods behind."

"But will it not be more for thy honour," said Kolbjorn, "and give thee a higher reputation among other kings, if, in banishing him from the country, thou shouldst allow him to keep his property, and show himself among other people? And we shall take care that he never comes back while we live. Consider of this, sire, by yourself, and have respect for our assurance."

The king replied, "Let him then go forth immediately."

They went back, therefore, to Sveinke, and told him the king's words; and also that the king had ordered him out of the country, and he should show his obedience, since he had forgotten himself towards the king. "It is for the honour of both that thou shouldst show obedience to the king."

Then Sveinke said, "There must be some great change if the king speaks agreeably to me; but why should I fly the country and my properties? Listen now to what I say. It appears to me better to die upon my property than to fly from my udal estates. Tell the king that I will not stir from them even an arrow-flight."

Kolbjorn replied, "This is scarcely prudent, or right; for it is better for one's own honour to give way to the best chief, than to make opposition to one's own loss. A gallant man succeeds wheresoever he goes; and thou wilt be the more respected wheresoever thou art, with

men of power, just because thou hast made head so boldly against so powerful a chief. Hear our promises, and pay some attention to our errand. We offer thee to manage thy estates, and take them faithfully under our protection; and also never, against thy will, to pay scat for thy land until thou comest back. We will pledge our lives and properties upon this. Do not throw away good counsel from thee, and avoid thus the ill fortune of other good men."

Then Sveinke was silent for a short time, and said at last, "Your endeavours are wise; but I have my suspicions that ye are changing a little the king's message. In consideration, however, of the great good-will that ye show me, I will hold your advice in such respect that I will go out of the country for the whole winter, if, according to your promises, I can then retain my estates in peace. Tell the king, also, these my words,—that I do this on your account, not on his."

Thereupon they returned to the king, and said, that Sveinke left all in the king's hands. "But entreats you to have respect to his honour. He will be away for three years, and then come back, if it be the king's pleasure. Do this; let all things be done according to what is suitable for the royal dignity and according to our entreaty, now that the matter is entirely in thy power, and we shall do all we can to prevent his returning against thy will."

The king replied, "Ye treat this matter like men, and, for your sakes, shall all things be as ye desire. Tell him so."

They thanked the king, and then went to Sveinke, and told him the king's gracious intentions. "We will be glad," said they, "if ye can be reconciled. The king requires, indeed that thy absence shall be for three years; but, if we know the truth rightly, we expect that before that time he will find he cannot do without thee in this part of the country. It will be to thy own future honour, therefore, to agree to this."

Sveinke replies, "What condition is better than this? Tell the king that I shall not vex him longer with my presence here, and accept of my goods and estates on this condition."

Thereupon he went home with his men, and set off directly; for he had prepared everything beforehand. Kolbjorn remains behind, and makes ready a feast for King Magnus, which also was thought of and prepared. Sveinke, on the other hand, rides up to Gautland with all the men he thought proper to take with him. The king let himself be entertained in guest-quarters at his house, returned to Viken, and Sveinke's estates were nominally the king's, but Kolbjorn had them under his charge. The king received guest-quarters in Viken, proceeded from thence northwards, and there was peace for a while; but now that the Elfgrims were without a chief, marauding gangs infested them, and the king saw this eastern part of the kingdom would be laid waste. It appeared to him, therefore, most suitable and advisable to make Sveinke himself oppose the stream, and twice he sent messages to him. But he did not stir until King Magnus himself was south in Denmark, when Sveinke and the king met,

and made a full reconciliation; on which Sveinke returned home to his house and estates, and was afterwards King Magnus's best and trustiest friend, who strengthened his kingdom on the eastern border; and their friendship continued as long as they lived.

9.—KING MAGNUS MAKES WAR ON THE SOUTHERN HEBUDES.

King Magnus undertook an expedition out of the country, with many fine men and a good assortment of shipping. With this armament he sailed out into the West sea, and first came to the Orkney Islands. There he took the two earls, Paul and Erlend, prisoners, and sent them east to Norway, and placed his son Sigurd as chief over the islands, leaving some counsellors to assist him. From thence King Magnus, with his followers, proceeded to the Southern Hebudes, and when he came there began to burn and lay waste the inhabited places, killing the people and plundering wherever he came with his men; and the country people fled in all directions, some into Scotland-fjord, others south to Cantire, or out to Ireland: some obtained life and safety by entering into his service. So says Bjorn Krephende:—

"In Lewis Isle with fearful blaze
The house-destroying fire plays;
To hills and rocks the people fly,
Fearing all shelter but the sky.
In Uist the king deep crimson made
The lightning of his glancing blade;
The peasant lost his land and life
Who dared to bide the Norseman's strife.
The hungry battle-birds were filled
In Skye with blood of foemen killed,
And wolves on Tyree's lonely shore
Dyed red their hairy jaws in gore.
The men of Mull were tired of flight;
The Scottish foemen would not fight,
And many an island-girl's wail
Was heard as through the isles we sail."

10.—OF LAGMAN, KING GUDROD'S SON.

King Magnus came with his forces to the Holy Island

(Iona), and gave peace and safety to all men there. It is told that the king opened the door of the little Columb's Kirk there, but did not go in, but instantly locked the door again, and said that no man should be so bold as to go into that church hereafter; which has been the case ever since. From thence King Magnus sailed to Islay, where he plundered and burnt; and when he had taken that country he proceeded south around Cantire, marauding on both sides in Scotland and Ireland, and advanced with his foray to Man, where he plundered. So says Bjorn Krephende:—

"On Sandey's plain our shield they spy:
From Isla smoke rose heaven-high,
Whirling up from the flashing blaze
The king's men o'er the island raise.
South of Cantire the people fled,
Scared by our swords in blood dyed red,
And our brave champion onward goes
To meet in Man the Norseman's foes."

Lagman (Lawman) was the name of the son of Gudrod, king of the Hebudes. Lawman was sent to defend the most northerly islands; but when King Magnus and his army came to the Hebudes, Lawman fled here and there about the isles, and at last King Magnus's men took him and his ship's crew as he was flying over to Ireland. The king put him in irons to secure him. So says Bjorn Krephende:—

"To Gudrod's son no rock or cave,
Shore-side or hill, a refuge gave;
Hunted around from isle to isle,
This Lawman found no safe asyle.
From isle to isle, o'er firth and sound,
Close on his track his foe he found.
At Ness the Agder chief at length
Seized him, and iron-chained his strength."

11.—OF THE FALL OF EARL HUGE THE BRAVE.

Afterwards King Magnus sailed to Wales; and when he came to the sound of Anglesey there came against

him an army from Wales, which was led by two earls—Hugo the brave, and Hugo the Stout. They began immediately to give battle, and there was a severe conflict. King Magnus shot with the bow; but Huge the Brave was all over in armour, so that nothing was bare about him excepting one eye. King Magnus let fly an arrow at him, as also did a Halogaland man who was beside the king. They both shot at once. The one shaft hit the nose-screen of the helmet, which was bent by it to one side, and the other arrow hit the earl's eye, and went through his head; and that was found to be the king's. Earl Huge fell, and the Britons fled with the loss of many people. So says Bjorn Krephende:—

"The swinger of the sword
Stood by Anglesey's ford;
His quick shaft flew,
And Huge slew.
His sword gleamed a while
O'er Anglesey Isle,
And his Norsemen's band
Scoured the Anglesey land."

There was also sung the following verse about it:—

"On the panzers arrows rattle,
Where our Norse king stands in battle;
From the helmets blood-streams flow,
Where our Norse king draws his bow:
His bowstring twangs,—its biting hail
Rattles against the ring-linked mail.
Up in the land in deadly strife
Our Norse king took Earl Huge's life."

King Magnus gained the victory in this battle, and then took Anglesey Isle, which was the farthest south the Norway kings of former days had ever extended their rule. Anglesey is a third part of Wales. After this battle King Magnus turned back with his fleet, and came first to Scotland. Then men went between the Scottish king, Melkolm and King Magnus, and a peace was made between them; so that all the islands lying west of Scotland, between which and the mainland he could pass in a vessel with her rudder shipped, should be

held to belong to the king of Norway. Now when King Magnus came north to Cantire, he had a skiff drawn over the strand at Cantire, and shipped the rudder of it. The king himself sat in the stern-sheets, and held the tiller; and thus he appropriated to himself the land that lay on the larboard side. Cantire is a great district, better than the best of the southern isles of the Hebudes, excepting Man; and there is a small neck of land between it and the mainland of Scotland, over which longships are often drawn.

12.—DEATH OF THE EARLS OF ORKNEY.

King Magnus was all the winter in the southern isles, and his men went over all the fjords of Scotland, rowing within all the inhabited and uninhabited isles, and took possession for the king of Norway of all the islands west of Scotland. King Magnus contracted in marriage his son Sigurd to Biadmynia, King Myrkjartan's daughter. Myrkjartan was a son of the Irish king Thialfe, and ruled over Connaught. The summer after, King Magnus, with his fleet, returned east to Norway. Earl Erland died of sickness at Nidaros, and is buried there; and Earl Paul died in Bergen.

Skopte Ogmundson, a grandson of Thorberg, was a gallant lenderman, who dwelt at Giske in Sunmore, and was married to Gudrun, a daughter of Thord Folason. Their children were Ogmund, Fin, Thord, and Thora, who was married to Asolf Skulason. Skopte's and Gudrun's sons were the most promising and popular men in their youth.

13.—QUARRELS OF KING MAGNUS AND KING INGE.

Steinkel, the Swedish king, died about the same time (1066) as the two Haralds fell, and the king who came after him in Svithjod was called Hakon. Afterwards Inge, a son of Steinkel, was king, and was a good and powerful king, strong and stout beyond most men; and he was king of Svithjod when King Magnus was king of Norway. King Magnus insisted that the boundaries of the countries in old times had been so, that the Gaut river divided the kingdoms of the Swedish and Norwegian kings, but afterwards the Vener lake up to Vermaland. Thus King Magnus insisted that he was owner of all the places lying west of the Vener lake up to Vermaland, which are the districts of Sundal, Nordal, Vear, and Vardyniar, with all the woods belonging thereto. But these had for a long time been under the Swedish dominion, and with respect to scat were joined to West Gautland; and, besides, the forest-settlers preferred being under the Swedish king. King Magnus rode from Viken up to Gautland with a great and fine army, and when he came to the forest-settlements he plundered and burnt all round; on which the people submitted, and took the oath of fidelity to him. When he came to the Vener lake, autumn was advanced and he went out to the island Kvaldinsey, and made a stronghold of turf and wood, and dug a ditch around it. When the work was finished, provisions and other necessaries that might be required were brought to it. The king left in it 300 men, who were the chosen of his forces, and Fin Skoptason and Sigurd Ulstreng as their commanders. The king himself returned to Viken.

14.—OF THE NORTHMEN.

When the Swedish king heard this he drew together people, and the report came that he would ride against these Northmen; but there was delay about his riding, and the Northmen made these lines:—

"The fat-hipped king, with heavy sides, Finds he must mount before he rides."

But when the ice set in upon the Vener lake King Inge rode down, and had near 300 men with him. He sent a message to the Northmen who sat in the burgh that they might retire with all the booty they had taken, and go to Norway. When the messengers brought this message, Sigurd Ulstreng replied to it; saying that King Inge must take the trouble to come, if he wished to drive them away like cattle out of a grass field, and said he must come nearer if he wished them to remove. The messengers returned with this answer to the king, who then rode out with all his army to the island, and again sent a message to the Northmen that they might go away, taking with them their weapons, clothes, and horses; but must leave behind all their booty. This they refused. The king made an assault upon them, and they shot at each other. Then the king ordered timber and stones to be collected, and he filled up the ditch; and then he fastened anchors to long spars which were brought up to the timber-walls, and, by the strength of many hands, the walls were broken down. Thereafter a large pile of wood was set on fire, and the lighted brands were flung in among them. Then the Northmen asked for quarter. The king ordered them to go out with-

out weapons or cloaks. As they went out each of them received a stroke with a whip, and then they set off for Norway, and all the forest-men submitted again to King Inge. Sigurd and his people went to King Magnus, and told him their misfortune.

15.—KING MAGNUS AND GIPARDE.

When King Magnus was east in Viken, there came to him a foreigner called Giparde. He gave himself out for a good knight, and offered his services to King Magnus; for he understood that in the king's dominions there was something to be done. The king received him well. At that time the king was preparing to go to Gautland, on which country the king had pretensions; and besides he would repay the Gautland people the disgrace they had occasioned him in spring, when he was obliged to fly from them. He had then a great force in arms, and the West Gautlanders in the northern districts submitted to him. He set up his camp on the borders, intending to make a foray from thence. When King Inge heard of this he collected troops, and hastened to oppose King Magnus; and when King Magnus heard of this expedition, many of the chiefs of the people urged him to turn back; but this the king would not listen to, but in the night time went unsuspectedly against the Swedish king. They met at Foxerne; and when he was drawing up his men in battle order he asked, "Where is Giparde?" but he was not to be found. Then the king made these verses:—

"Cannot the foreign knight abide
Our rough array?—where does he
hide?"

Then a skald who followed the king replied—

"The king asks where the foreign knight
In our array rides to the fight:
Giparde the knight rode quite away
When our men joined in bloody fray.
When swords were wet the knight was slow
With his bay horse in front to go;
The foreign knight could not abide
Our rough array, and went to hide."

There was a great slaughter, and after the battle the field was covered with the Swedes slain, and King Inge escaped by flight. King Magnus gained a great victory. Then came Giparde riding down from the country, and people did not speak well of him for not being in the fight. He went away, and proceeded westward to England; and the voyage was stormy, and Giparde lay in bed. There was an Iceland man called Eldjarn, who went to bale out the water in the ship's hold, and when he saw where Giparde was lying he made this verse:—

"Does it beseem a courtman bold
Here to be dozing in the hold?
The bearded knight should danger face:
The leak gains on our ship apace.
Here, ply this bucket! bale who can;
We need the work of every man.
Our sea-horse stands full to the breast,—
Sluggards and cowards must not rest."

When they came west to England, Giparde said the Northmen had slandered him. A meeting was appointed, and a count came to it, and the case was brought before him for trial. He said he was not much acquainted with law cases, as he was but young, and had only been a short time in office; and also, of all things, he said what he least understood to judge about was poetry. "But let us hear what it was." Then Eldjarn sang:—

"I heard that in the bloody fight
Giparde drove all our foes to flight:
Brave Giparde would the foe abide,
While all our men ran off to hide.
At Foxerne the fight was won
By Giparde's valour all alone:
Where Giparde fought, alone was he;
Not one survived to fight or flee."

Then said the count, "Although I know but little about

skald-craft, I can hear that this is no slander, but rather the highest praise and honour." Giparde could say nothing against it, yet he felt it was a mockery.

16.—BATTLE OF FOXERNE.

The spring after, as soon as the ice broke up, King Magnus, with a great army, sailed eastwards to the Gaut river, and went up the eastern arm of it, laying waste all that belonged to the Swedish dominions. When they came to Foxerne they landed from their vessels; but as they came over a river on their way an army of Gautland people came against them, and there was immediately a great battle, in which the Northmen were overwhelmed by numbers, driven to flight, and many of them killed near to a waterfall. King Magnus fled, and the Gautlanders pursued, and killed those they could get near. King Magnus was easily known. He was a very stout man, and had a red short cloak over him, and bright yellow hair like silk that fell over his shoulders. Ogmund Skoptason, who was a tall and handsome man, rode on one side of the king. He said, "Sire, give me that cloak."

The king said, "What would you do with it?"

"I would like to have it," said Ogmund; "and you have given me greater gifts, sire."

The road was such that there were great and wide plains, so that the Gautlanders and Northmen were always in sight of each other, unless where clumps of wood and bushes concealed them from each other now and then. The king gave Ogmund the cloak and he put it on. When they came out again upon the plain ground,

Ogmund and his people rode off right across the road. The Gautlanders, supposing this must be the king, rode all after him, and the king proceeded to the ships. Ogmund escaped with great difficulty; however, he reached the ships at last in safety. King Magnus then sailed down the river, and proceeded north to Viken.

17—MEETING OF THE KINGS AT THE GAUT RIVER.

The following summer a meeting of the kings was agreed upon at Konghelle on the Gaut river; and King Magnus, the Swedish king, Inge, and the Danish king, Eirik Sveinson, all met there, after giving each other safe conduct to the meeting. Now when the Thing had sat down the kings went forward upon the plain, apart from the rest of the people, and they talked with each other a little while. Then they returned to their people, and a treaty was brought about, by which each should possess the dominions his forefathers had held before him; but each should make good to his own men the waste and manslaughter suffered by them, and then they should agree between themselves about settling this with each other. King Magnus should marry King Inge's daughter Margaret, who afterwards was called Peace-offering. This was proclaimed to the people; and thus, within a little hour, the greatest enemies were made the best of friends.

It was observed by the people that none had ever seen men with more of the air of chiefs than these had. King Inge was the largest and stoutest, and, from his age, of the most dignified appearance. King Magnus ap-

peared the most gallant and brisk, and King Eirik the most handsome. But they were all handsome men; stout, gallant, and ready in speech. After this was settled they parted.

18.—KING MAGNUS'S MARRIAGE.

King Magnus got Margaret, King Inge's daughter, as above related; and she was sent from Svithjod to Norway with an honourable retinue. King Magnus had some children before, whose names shall here be given. The one of his sons who was of a mean mother was called Eystein; the other, who was a year younger, was called Sigurd, and his mother's name was Thora. Olaf was the name of a third son, who was much younger than the two first mentioned, and whose mother was Sigrid, a daughter of Saxe of Vik, who was a respectable man in the Throndhjem country; she was the king's concubine. People say that when King Magnus came home from his viking cruise to the Western countries, he and many of his people brought with them a great deal of the habits and fashion of clothing of those western parts. They went about on the streets with bare legs, and had short kirtles and over-cloaks; and therefore his men called him Magnus Barefoot or Bareleg. Some called him Magnus the Tall, others Magnus the Strife-lover. He was distinguished among other men by his tall stature. The mark of his height is put down in Mary church, in the merchant town of Nidaros, which King Harald built. In the northern door there were cut into the wall three crosses,—one for Harald's stature, one for Olaf's, and

one for Magnus's; and which crosses each of them could with the greatest ease kiss. The upper was Harald's cross; the lowest was Magnus's; and Olaf's was in the middle, about equally distant from both.

It is said that Magnus composed the following verses about the emperor's daughter:—

"The ring of arms where blue swords gleam,
The battle-shout, the eagle's scream,
The joy of war, no more can please:
Matilda is far o'er the seas.

My sword may break, my shield be cleft,
Of land or life I may be reft;
Yet I could sleep, but for one care,—
One, o'er the seas, with light-brown hair."

He also composed the following:—

"The time that breeds delay feels long,
The skald feels weary of his song;
What sweetens, brightens, eases life?
'Tis a sweet-smiling lovely wife.

My time feels long in Thing affairs,
In Things my loved one ne'er appears.
The folk full-dressed, while I am sad,
Talk and oppose—can I be glad?"

When King Magnus heard the friendly words the emperor's daughter had spoken about him—that she had said such a man as King Magnus was appeared to her an excellent man, he composed the following:—

"The lover hears,—across the sea,
A favouring word was breathed to me.
The lovely one with light-brown hair
May trust her thoughts to senseless air;

Her thoughts will find like thoughts in me;
And though my love I cannot see,
Affection's thoughts fly in the wind,
And meet each other, true and kind."

19.—OF THE QUARREL OF KING MAGNUS AND SKOPTE.

Skopte Ogmundson came into variance with King Magnus, and they quarrelled about the inheritance of a deceased person which Skopte retained; but the king demanded it with so much earnestness, that it had a dangerous appearance. Many meetings were held about the affair, and Skopte took the resolution that he and his son should never put themselves into the king's power

at the same time; and besides there was no necessity to do so. When Skopte was with the king he represented to him that there was relationship between the king and him; and also that he, Skopte, had always been the king's friend, and his father's likewise, and that their friendship had never been shaken. He added, "People might know that I have sense enough not to hold a strife, sire, with you, if I was wrong in what I asked; but it is inherited from my ancestors to defend my rights against any man, without distinction of persons." The king was just the same on this point, and his resolution was by no means softened by such a speech. Then Skopte went home.

20.—FIN SKOPTASON'S PROCEEDINGS.

Then Fin Skoptason went to the king, spoke with him, and entreated him to render justice to the father and son in this business. The king answers angrily and sharply. Then said Fin, "I expected something else, sire, from you, than that you would use the law's vexations against me when I took my seat in Kvaldinsey Island, which few of your other friends would do; as they said, what was true, that those who were left there were deserted ıd doomed to death, if King Inge had not shown gre ..er generosity to us than you did; although many consider that we brought shame and disgrace only from thence." The king was not to be moved by this speech, and Fin returned home.

21.—OGMUND SKOPTASON'S PROCEEDINGS.

Then came Ogmund Skoptason to the king; and when

he came before him he produced his errand, and begged the king to do what was right and proper towards him and his father. The king insisted that the right was on his side, and said they were "particularly impudent."

Then said Ogmund, "It is a very easy thing for thee, having the power, to do me and my father injustice; and I must say the old proverb is true, that one whose life you save gives none, or a very bad return. This I shall add, that never again shall I come into thy service; nor my father, if I can help it." Then Ogmund went home, and they never saw each other again.

22.— SKOPTE OGMUNDSON'S VOYAGE ABROAD.

The spring after, Skopte Ogmundson made ready to travel out of the country. They had five long-ships all well equipped. His sons, Ogmund, Fin, and Thord, accompanied him on this journey. It was very late before they were ready, and in autumn they went over to Flanders, and wintered there. Early in spring they sailed westward to Valland, and stayed there all summer. Then they sailed further, and through Norvasund; and came in autumn to Rome, where Skopte died. All, both father and sons, died on this journey. Thord, who died in Sicily, lived the longest. It is a common saying among the people that Skopte was the first Northman who sailed through Norvasund; and this voyage was much celebrated.

23.—MIRACLE OF KING OLAF THE SAINT AT A FIRE.

It happened once in the merchant town (Nidaros)

where King Olaf reposes, that there broke out a fire in the town which spread around. Then Olaf's shrine was taken out of the church, and set up opposite the fire. Thereupon came a crazy foolish man, struck the shrine, threatened the holy saint, and said all must be consumed by the flames, both churches and other houses, if he did not save them by his prayers. Now the burning of the church did cease, by the help of Almighty God; but the insane man got sore eyes on the following night, and he lay there until King Olaf entreated God Almighty to be merciful to him; after which he recovered in the same church.

24.—MIRACLE OF KING OLAF ON A LAME WOMAN.

It happened once in the merchant town that a woman was brought to the place where the holy King Olaf reposes. She was so miserably shaped, that she was altogether crumpled up; so that both her feet lay in a circle against her loins. But as she was diligent in her prayers, often weeping and making vows to King Olaf, he cured her great infirmities; so that feet, legs, and other limbs straightened, and every limb and part came to the right use for which they were made. Before she could not creep there, and now she went away active and brisk to her family and home.

25.—WAR IN IRELAND.

When King Magnus had been nine years king of Norway (1094-1102), he equipped himself to go out of the country with a great force. He sailed out into the West

sea with the finest men who could be got in Norway. All the powerful men of the country followed him; such as Sigurd Hranason, Vidkun Jonson, Dag Eilifson, Serk of Sogn, Eyvind Olboge, the king's marshal Ulf Hranason, brother of Sigurd, and many other great men. With all this armament the king sailed west to the Orkney Islands, from whence he took with him Earl Erlend's sons, Magnus and Erling, and then sailed to the southern Hebudes. But as he lay under the Scotch land, Magnus Erlendson ran away in the night from the king's ship, swam to the shore, escaped into the woods, and came at last to the Scotch king's court. King Magnus sailed to Ireland with his fleet, and plundered there. King Myrkjartan came to his assistance, and they conquered a great part of the country, both Dublin and Dyflinnarskire (Dublin shire). King Magnus was in winter (1103) up in Connaught with King Myrkjartan, but set men to defend the country he had taken. Towards spring both kings went westward with their army all the way to Ulster, where they had many battles, subdued the country, and had conquered the greatest part of Ulster when Myrkjartan returned home to Connaught.

26.—KING MAGNUS'S FORAY ON THE LAND.

King Magnus rigged his ships, and intended returning to Norway, but set his men to defend the country of Dublin. He lay at Ulster ready for sea with his whole fleet. As they thought they needed cattle for ship-provision, King Magnus sent a message to King Myrkjartan, telling him to send some cattle for slaughter; and ap-

pointed the day before Bartholomew's day as the day they should arrive, if the messengers reached him in safety; but the cattle had not made their appearance the evening before Bartholomew's mass. On the mass-day itself, when the sun rose in the sky, King Magnus went on shore himself with the greater part of his men, to look after his people, and to carry off cattle from the coast. The weather was calm, the sun shone, and the road lay through mires and mosses, and there were paths cut through; but there was brushwood on each side of the road. When they came somewhat farther, they reached a height from which they had a wide view. They saw from it a great dust rising up the country, as of horsemen, and they said to each other, "That must be the Irish army;" but others said, "It was their own men returning with the cattle." They halted there; and Eyvind Olboge said, "How, sire, do you intend to direct the march? The men think we are advancing imprudently. You know the Irish are treacherous; think, therefore, of a good counsel for your men." Then the king said, "Let us draw up our men, and be ready, if there be treachery." This was done, and the king and Eyvind went before the line. King Magnus had a helmet on his head; a red shield, in which was inlaid a gilded lion; and was girt with the sword of Legbit, of which the hilt was of tooth (ivory), and handgrip wound about with gold thread; and the sword was extremely sharp. In his hand he had a short spear, and a red silk short cloak, over his coat, on which, both before and behind, was embroidered a lion in yellow silk; and all men

acknowledged that they never had seen a brisker, statelier man. Eyvind had also a red silk cloak like the king's; and he also was a stout, handsome, warlike man.

27.—FALL OF KING MAGNUS.

When the dust-cloud approached nearer they knew their own men, who were driving the cattle. The Irish king had been faithful to the promises he had given the king, and had sent them. Thereupon they all turned towards the ships, and it was mid-day. When they came to the mires they went but slowly over the boggy places; and then the Irish started up on every side against them from every bushy point of land, and the battle began instantly. The Northmen were going divided in various heaps, so that many of them fell.

Then said Eyvind to the king, "Unfortunate is this march to our people, and we must instantly hit upon some good plan."

The king answered, "Call all the men together with the war-horns under the banner, and the men who are here shall make a rampart with their shields, and thus we will retreat backwards out of the mires; and we will clear ourselves fast enough when we get upon firm ground."

The Irish shot boldly; and although they fell in crowds, there came always two in the place of one. Now when the king had come to the nearest ditch there was a very difficult crossing, and few places were passable; so that many Northmen fell there. Then the king called to his lenderman Thorgrim Skinhufa, who was an Upland man,

and ordered him to go over the ditch with his division. "We shall defend you," said he, "in the meantime, so that no harm shall come to you. Go out then to those holms, and shoot at them from thence; for ye are good bowmen."

When Thorgrim and his men came over the ditch they cast their shields behind their backs, and set off to the ships.

When the king saw this, he said, "Thou art deserting thy king in an unmanly way. I was foolish in making thee a lenderman, and driving Sigurd Hund out of the country; for never would he have behaved so."

King Magnus received a wound, being pierced by a spear through both thighs above the knees. The king laid hold of the shaft between his legs, broke the spear in two, and said, "Thus we break spear-shafts, my lads; let us go briskly on. Nothing hurts me." A little after King Magnus was struck in the neck with an Irish axe, and this was his death-wound. Then those who were behind fled. Vidkun Jonson instantly killed the man who had given the king his death-wound, and fled, after having received three wounds; but brought the king's banner and the sword Legbit to the ships. Vidkun was the last man who fled; the other next to him was Sigurd Hranason, and the third before him, Dag Eilifson. There fell with King Magnus, Eyvind Olboge, Ulf Hranason, and many other great people. Many of the Northmen fell, but many more of the Irish. The Northmen who escaped sailed away immediately in autumn. Erling, Earl Erlend's son, fell with King Magnus in Ireland; but the

men who fled from Ireland came to the Orkney Islands. Now when King Sigurd heard that his father had fallen, he set off immediately, leaving the Irish king's daughter behind, and proceeded in autumn with the whole fleet directly to Norway.

28.—OF KING MAGNUS AND VIDKUN JONSON.

King Magnus was ten years king of Norway (1094-1103), and in his days there was good peace kept within the country; but the people were sorely oppressed with levies. King Magnus was beloved by his men, but the bondes thought him harsh. The words have been transmitted from him that he said when his friends observed that he proceeded incautiously when he was on his expeditions abroad,—"The kings are made for honour, not for long life." King Magnus was nearly thirty years of age when he fell. Vidkun did not fly until he had killed the man who gave the king his mortal wound, and for this cause King Magnus's sons had him in the most affectionate regard.

SAGA OF SIGURD THE CRUSADER AND HIS BROTHERS EYSTEIN AND OLAF.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Agrip, *Fagrskinna*, and *Morkinskinna* more or less complete the story of the sons of Magnus. They contain some things omitted by Snorre, while, on the other hand, some facts related by Snorre are not found in the above sources.

Thjodrek the Monk tells of Sigurd that he made a journey to Jerusalem, conquered many heathen cities, and among them Sidon; that he captured a cave defended by robbers, received presents from Baldwin, returned to Norway in Eystein's lifetime, and became insane, as a result, as some say, of a poisonous drink.

The three brothers became kings in the year 1103. Olaf died 1115, Eystein 1122 or 1123, Sigurd 1130.

Skalds quoted in this saga are: Thorarin Stutfeld, Einar Skulason, Haldor Skvaldre, and Arne Fjoruskeif.

1.—BEGINNING OF THE REIGN OF KING MAGNUS'S SONS.

After King Magnus Barefoot's fall, his sons, Eystein, Sigurd, and Olaf, took the kingdom of Norway. Eystein got the northern, and Sigurd the southern part of the country. King Olaf was then four or five years old, and the third part of the country which he had was under the management of his two brothers. King Sigurd was chosen king when he was thirteen or fourteen years old, and Eystein was a year older. King Sigurd left west of the sea the Irish king's daughter. When King Magnus's sons were chosen kings, the men who had followed Skopte Ogmundson returned home. Some had been to

Jerusalem, some to Constantinople; and there they had made themselves renowned, and they had many kinds of novelties to talk about. By these extraordinary tidings many men in Norway were incited to the same expedition; and it was also told that the Northmen who liked to go into the military service at Constantinople found many opportunities of getting property. Then these Northmen desired much that one of the two kings, either Eystein or Sigurd, should go as commander of the troop which was preparing for this expedition. The kings agreed to this, and carried on the equipment at their common expense. Many great men, both of the lendermen and bondes, took part in this enterprise; and when all was ready for the journey it was determined that Sigurd should go, and Eystein in the meantime, should rule the kingdom upon their joint account.

2.—OF THE EARLS OF ORKNEY.

A year or two after King Magnus Barefoot's fall, Hakon, a son of Earl Paul, came from Orkney. The kings gave him the earldom and government of the Orkney Islands, as the earls before him, his father Paul or his Uncle Erland, had possessed it; and Earl Hakon then sailed back immediately to Orkney.

3.—KING SIGURD'S JOURNEY OUT OF THE COUNTRY.

Four years after the fall of King Magnus (1107), King Sigurd sailed with his people from Norway. He had then sixty ships. So says Thorarin Stutfeld:—

"A young king just and kind,
People of loyal mind:
Such brave men soon agree,—
To distant lands they sail with glee.
To the distant Holy Land
A brave and pious band,
Magnificent and gay,
In sixty long-ships glide away."

King Sigurd sailed in autumn to England, where Henry, son of William the Bastard, was then king, and Sigurd remained with him all winter. So says Einar Skulason:—

"The king is on the waves!
The storm he boldly braves.
His ocean-steed,
With winged speed,
O'er the white-flashing surges,
To England's coast he urges;
And there he stays the winter o'er:
More gallant king ne'er trod that shore."

4.—OF KING SIGURD'S JOURNEY.

In spring King Sigurd and his fleet sailed westward to Valland (1108), and in autumn came to Galicia, where he stayed the second winter (1109). So says Einar Skulason:—

"Our king, whose land so wide
No kingdom stands beside,
In Jacob's land next winter spent,
On holy things intent;
And I have heard the royal youth
Cut off an earl who swerved from truth.
Our brave king will endure no ill,—
The hawks with him will get their fill."

It went thus:—The earl who ruled over the land made an agreement with King Sigurd, that he should provide King Sigurd and his men a market at which they could purchase victuals all the winter; but this he did not fulfil longer than to about Yule. It began then to be difficult to get food and necessaries, for it is a poor barren land. Then King Sigurd with a great body of men went against a castle which belonged to the earl; and the earl fled from it, having but few people. King Sigurd took there a great deal of victuals and of other booty, which he put on board of his ships, and then made ready

and proceeded westward to Spain. It so fell out, as the king was sailing past Spain, that some vikings who were cruising for plunder met him with a fleet of galleys, and King Sigurd attacked them. This was his first battle with heathen men; and he won it, and took eight galleys from them. So says Taldor Skvaldre:—

"Bold vikings, not slow
To the death-fray to go,
Meet our Norse king by chance,
And their galleys advance.

The bold vikings lost
Many a man of their host,
And eight galleys too,
With cargo and crew."

Thereafter King Sigurd sailed against a castle called Sintre and fought another battle. This castle is in Spain, and was occupied by many heathens, who from thence plundered Christian people. King Sigurd took the castle, and killed every man in it, because they refused to be baptized; and he got there an immense booty. So says Haldor Skvaldre:—

"From Spain I have much news to tell
Of what our generous king befell.
And first he routs the viking crew,
At Cintra next the heathens slew;

The men he treated as God's foes,
Who dared the true faith to oppose.
No man he spared who would not take
The Christian faith for Jesus' sake."

5.—LISBON TAKEN.

After this King Sigurd sailed with his fleet to Lisbon, which is a great city in Spain, half Christian and half heathen; for there lies the division between Christian Spain and heathen Spain, and all the districts which lie west of the city are occupied by heathens. There King Sigurd had his third battle with the heathens, and gained the victory, and with it a great booty. So says Haldor Skvaldre:—

"The son of kings on Lisbon's plains
A third and bloody battle gains.

He and his Norsemen boldly land,
Running their stout ships on the strand."

Then King Sigurd sailed westwards along heathen Spain, and brought up at a town called Alkasse; and here he had his fourth battle with the heathens, and took the town, and killed so many people that the town was left empty. They got there also immense booty. So says Haldor Skvaldre:—

"A fourth great battle, I am told,
Our Norse king and his people hold
At Alkasse; and here again
The victory fell to our Norsemen."

And also this verse:—

"I heard that through the town he went,
And heathen widows' wild lament
Resounded in the empty halls;
For every townsman flies or falls."

6.—BATTLE IN THE ISLAND FORMINTERRA.

King Sigurd then proceeded on his voyage, and came to Norfasund; and in the sound he was met by a large viking force, and the king gave them battle; and this was his fifth engagement with heathens since the time he left Norway. He gained the victory here also. So says Haldor Skvaldre:—

"Ye moistened your dry swords with blood,
As through Norfasund ye stood;
The screaming raven got a feast,
As ye sailed onward to the East."

King Sigurd then sailed eastward along the coast of Serkland, and came to an island there called Forminterra. There a great many heathen Moors had taken up their dwelling in a cave, and had built a strong stone wall before its mouth. They harried the country all round, and carried all their booty to their cave. King Sigurd landed on this island, and went to the cave; but it lay in a precipice, and there was a high winding path to the stone wall, and the precipice above projected over it. The heathens

defended the stone wall, and were not afraid of the Northmen's arms; for they could throw stones, or shoot down upon the Northmen under their feet; neither did the Northmen, under such circumstances, dare to mount up. The heathens took their clothes and other valuable things, carried them out upon the wall, spread them out before the Northmen, shouted, and defied them, and upbraided them as cowards. Then Sigurd fell upon this plan. He had two ship's boats, such as we call barks, drawn up the precipice right above the mouth of the cave; and had thick ropes fastened around the stem, stern, and hull of each. In these boats as many men went as could find room, and then the boats were lowered by the ropes down in front of the mouth of the cave; and the men in the boats shot with stones and missles into the cave, and the heathens were thus driven from the stone wall. Then Sigurd with his troops climbed up the precipice to the foot of the stone wall, which they succeeded in breaking down, so that they came into the cave. Now the heathens fled within the stone wall that was built across the cave; on which the king ordered large trees to be brought to the cave, made a great pile in the mouth of it, and set fire to the wood. When the fire and smoke got the upper hand, some of the heathens lost their lives in it; some fled; some fell by the hands of the Northmen; and part were killed, part burned; and the Northmen made the greatest booty they had got on all their expeditions. So says Haldor Skvaldre:—

"Forminterra lay
In the victor's way;
His ships' stems fly
To victory.

The bluemen there
Must fire bear,
And Norsemen's steel
At their hearts feel."

And also thus:—

"'Twas a feat of renown,—
The boat lowered down,
With a boat's crew brave,
In front of the cave;
While up the rock scaling,
And comrades up trailing,
The Norsemen gain,
And the bluemen are slain."

And also Thorarin Stutfeld says:—

"The king's men up the mountain's side
Drag two boats from the ocean's tide:
The two boats lay,
Like hill-wolves grey.
Now o'er the rock in ropes they're swinging
Well manned, and death to bluemen bringing:
They hang before
The robber's door."

7.—OF THE BATTLES OF IVIZA AND MINORCA.

Thereafter King Sigurd proceeded on his expedition, and came to an island called Iviza (Ivica), and had there his seventh battle, and gained a victory. So says Haldor Skvaldre:—

"His ships at Ivica now ride,
The king's, whose fame spreads far and wide;
And hear the bearers of the shield
Their arms again in battle wield."

Thereafter King Sigurd came to an island called Manork (Minorca), and held there his eighth battle with heathen men, and gained the victory. So says Haldor Skvaldre:—

"On green Minorca's plains
The eighth battle now he gains:
Again the heathen foe
Falls at the Norse king's blow."

8.—DUKE ROGER MADE A KING.

In spring King Sigurd came to Sicily (1109), and remained a long time there. There was then a Duke Roger in Sicily, who received the king kindly, and invited him to a feast. King Sigurd came to it with a great retinue, and was splendidly entertained. Every day Duke Roger stood at the company's table, doing service to the king;

but the seventh day of the feast, when the people had come to table, and had wiped their hands, King Sigurd took the duke by the hand, led him up to the high-seat, and saluted him with the title of king; and gave the right that there should be always a king over the dominion of Sicily, although before there had only been earls or dukes over that country.

9.—OF KING ROGER.

King Roger of Sicily was a very great king. He won and subdued all Apulia, and many large islands besides in the Greek sea; and therefore he was called Roger the Great. His son was William, king of Sicily, who for a long time had great hostility with the emperor of Constantinople. King William had three daughters, but no son. One of his daughters he married to the Emperor Henry, a son of the Emperor Frederik; and their son was Frederik, who for a short time after was emperor of Rome. His second daughter was married to the Duke of Kipr. The third daughter, Margaret, was married to the chief of the corsairs; but the Emperor Henry killed both these brothers-in-law. The daughter of Roger the Great, king of Sicily, was married to the Emperor Manuel of Constantinople; and their son was the Emperor Kirjalax.

10.—KING SIGURD'S EXPEDITION TO PALESTINE.

In the summer (1110) King Sigurd sailed across the Greek sea to Palestine, and thereupon went up to Jerusalem, where he met Baldwin, king of Palestine. King

Baldwin received him particularly well, and rode with him all the way to the river Jordan, and then back to the city of Jerusalem. Einar Skulason speaks thus of it:—

"Good reason has the skald to sing
The generous temper of the king,
Whose sea-cold keel from northern waves
Ploughs the blue sea that green isles laves.
At Acre scarce were we made fast,
In holy ground our anchors cast,
When the king made a joyful morn
To all who toil with him had borne."

And again he made these lines:—

"To Jerusalem he came,
He who loves war's noble game,
(The skald no greater monarch finds
Beneath the heaven's wide hall of winds)
All sin and evil from him flings
In Jordan's wave: for all his sins
(Which all must praise) he pardon wins."

King Sigurd stayed a long time in the land of Jerusalem (Jorsalaland) in autumn, and in the beginning of winter.

11.—SIDON TAKEN.

King Baldwin made a magnificent feast for King Sigurd and many of his people, and gave him many holy relics. By the orders of King Baldwin and the patriarch, there was taken a splinter off the holy cross; and on this holy relic both made oath, that this wood was of the holy cross upon which God Himself had been tortured. Then this holy relic was given to King Sigurd; with the condition that he, and twelve other men with him, should swear to promote Christianity with all his power, and erect an archbishop's seat in Norway if he could; and also that the cross should be kept where the holy King Olaf reposed, and that he should introduce tithes, and also pay them himself. After this King Sigurd returned to his ships at Acre; and then King Baldwin prepared to go to Syria, to a heathen town called Saet. On this expedition

King Sigurd accompanied him, and after the kings had besieged the town some time it surrendered, and they took possession of it, and of a great treasure of money; and their men found other booty. King Sigurd made a present of his share to King Baldwin. So says Haldor Skvaldre:—

"He who for wolves provides the feast
Seized on the city in the East,
The heathen nest; and honour drew,
And gold to give, from those he slew."

Einar Skulason also tells of it:—

"The Norsemen's king, the skalds relate,
Has ta'en the heathen town of Saet:
The slinging engine with dread noise
Gables and roofs with stones destroys.
The town wall totters too,—it falls;
The Norsemen mount the blackened walls.
He who stains red the raven's bill
Has won,—the town lies at his will."

Thereafter King Sigurd went to his ships and made ready to leave Palestine. They sailed north to the island Cyprus; and King Sigurd stayed there a while, and then went to the Greek country, and came to the land with all his fleet at Engilsnes. Here he lay still for a fortnight, although every day it blew a breeze for going before the wind to the north; but Sigurd would wait a side wind, so that the sails might stretch fore and aft in the ship; for in all his sails there was silk joined in, before and behind in the sail, and neither those before nor those behind the ships could see the slightest appearance of this, if the vessel was before the wind; so they would rather wait a side wind.

12.—SIGURD'S EXPEDITION TO CONSTANTINOPLE.

When King Sigurd sailed into Constantinople, he steered near the land. Over all the land there are burghs, castles, country towns, the one upon the other without

interval. There from the land one could see into the bights of the sails; and the sails stood so close beside each other, that they seemed to form one enclosure. All the people turned out to see King Sigurd sailing past. The Emperor Kirjalax had also heard of King Sigurd's expedition, and ordered the city port of Constantinople to be opened, which is called the Gold Tower, through which the emperor rides when he has been long absent from Constantinople, or has made a campaign in which he has been victorious. The emperor had precious cloths spread out from the Gold Tower to Laktjarna, which is the name of the emperor's most splendid hall. King Sigurd ordered his men to ride in great state into the city, and not to regard all the new things they might see; and this they did. King Sigurd and his followers rode with this great splendour into Constantinople, and then came to the magnificent hall, where everything was in the grandest style.

King Sigurd remained here some time. The Emperor Kirjalax sent his men to him to ask if he would rather accept from the emperor six lispund of gold, or would have the emperor give the games in his honour which the emperor was used to have played at the Padreim. King Sigurd preferred the games, and the messengers said the spectacle would not cost the emperor less than the money offered. Then the emperor prepared for the games, which were held in the usual way; but this day everything went on better for the king than for the queen; for the queen has always the half part in the games, and their men, therefore, always strive against

each other in all games. The Greeks accordingly think that when the king's men win more games at the Padreim than the queen's, the king will gain the victory when he goes into battle. People who have been in Constantinople tell that the Padreim is thus constructed:— A high wall surrounds a flat plain, which may be compared to a round bare Thing-place, with earthen banks all around at the stone wall, on which banks the spectators sit; but the games themselves are in the flat plain. There are many sorts of old events represented concerning the Asas, Volsungs, and Giukungs, in these games; and all the figures are cast in copper, or metal, with so great art that they appear to be living things; and to the people it appears as if they were really present in the games. The games themselves are so artfully and cleverly managed, that people appear to be riding in the air; and at them also are used shot-fire[1], and all kinds of harp-playing, singing, and music instruments.

13.—SIGURD AND THE EMPEROR OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

It is related that King Sigurd one day was to give the emperor a feast, and he ordered his men to provide sumptuously all that was necessary for the entertainment; and when all things were provided which are suitable for an entertainment given by a great personage to persons of high dignity, King Sigurd ordered his men to go to the street in the city where firewood was sold, as they would require a great quantity to prepare the feast. They said the king need not be afraid of wanting firewood, for

[1]Fireworks, or the Greek fire, probably were used.—L.

every day many loads were brought into the town. When it was necessary, however, to have firewood, it was found that it was all sold, which they told the king. He replied, "Go and try if you can get walnuts. They will answer as well as wood for fuel." They went and got as many as they needed. Now came the emperor, and his grandees and court, and sat down to table. All was very splendid; and King Sigurd received the emperor with great state, and entertained him magnificently. When the queen and the emperor found that nothing was wanting, she sent some persons to inquire what they had used for firewood; and they came to a house filled with walnuts, and they came back and told the queen. "Truly," said she, "this is a magnificent king, who spares no expense where his honour is concerned." She had contrived this to try what they would do when they could get no firewood to dress their feast with.

14.—KING SIGURD THE CRUSADER'S RETURN HOME.

King Sigurd soon after prepared for his return home. He gave the emperor all his ships; and the valuable figure-heads which were on the king's ships were set up in Peter's church, where they have since been to be seen. The emperor gave the king many horses and guides to conduct him through all his dominions. Then King Sigurd left Constantinople; but a great many Northmen remained, and went into the emperor's pay. Then King Sigurd traveled from Bulgaria, and through Hungary, Pannonia, Suabia, and Bavaria, where he met the Roman emperor, Lotharius, who received him in the most friendly

way, gave him guides through his dominions, and had markets established for him at which he could purchase all he required. When King Sigurd came to Slesvik in Denmark, Earl Eilif made a sumptuous feast for him; and it was then midsummer. In Heidaby he met the Danish king, Nikolas, who received him in the most friendly way, made a great entertainment for him, accompanied him north to Jutland, and gave him a ship provided with everything needful. From thence the king returned to Norway, and was joyfully welcomed on his return to his kingdom (1110). It was the common talk among the people, that none had ever made so honourable a journey from Norway as this of King Sigurd. He was twenty years of age, and had been three years on these travels. His brother Olaf was then twelve years old.

15.—EYSTEIN'S DOINGS IN THE MEANTIME.

King Eystein had also effected much in the country that was useful while King Sigurd was on his journey. He established a monastery at Nordnes in Bergen, and endowed it with much property. He also built Michael's church, which is a very splendid stone temple. In the king's house there he also built the Church of the Apostles, and the great hall, which is the most magnificent wooden structure that was ever built in Norway. He also built a church at Agdanes with a parapet; and a harbour, where formerly there had been a barren spot only. In Nidaros he built in the king's street the church of Saint Nikolas, which was particularly ornamented with carved work, and all in wood. He also built a church north in Vagar

in Halogaland, and endowed it with property and revenues.

16.—OF KING EYSTEIN.

King Eystein sent a verbal message to the most intelligent and powerful of the men of Jamtaland, and invited them to him; received them all as they came with great kindness; accompanied them part of the way home, and gave them presents, and thus enticed them into a friendship with him. Now as many of them became accustomed to visit him and receive gifts from him, and he also sent gifts to some who did not come themselves, he soon gained the favour of all the people who had most influence in the country. Then he spoke to the Jamtaland people, and told them they had done ill in turning away from the kings of Norway, and withdrawing from them their taxes and allegiance. He began by saying how the Jamtaland people had submitted to the reign of Hakon, the foster-son of Athelstane, and had long afterwards been subjected to the kings of Norway, and he represented to them how many useful things they could get from Norway, and how inconvenient it was for them to apply to the Swedish king for what they needed. By these speeches he brought matters so far that the Jamtaland people of their own accord offered to be subject to him, which they said was useful and necessary for them; and thus, on both sides, it was agreed that the Jamtalanders should put their whole country under King Eystein. The first beginning was with the men of consequence, who persuaded the people to take an oath of fidelity to King Eystein; and then they went to King Eystein

and confirmed the country to him by oath; and this arrangement has since continued for a long time. King Eystein thus conquered Jamtaland by his wisdom, and not by hostile inroads, as some of his forefathers had done.

17.—OF KING EYSTEIN'S PERFECTIONS.

King Eystein was the handsomest man that could be seen. He had blue open eyes; his hair yellow and curling; his stature not tall, but of the middle size. He was wise, intelligent, and acquainted with the laws and history. He had much knowledge of mankind, was quick in counsel, prudent in words, and very eloquent and very generous. He was very merry, yet modest; and was liked and beloved, indeed, by all the people. He was married to Ingebjorg, a daughter of Guthorm, son of Thorer of Steig; and their daughter was Maria, who afterwards married Gudbrand Skafhogson.

18.—OF IVAR INGIMUNDSON.

King Eystein had in many ways improved the laws and priveleges of the country people, and kept strictly to the laws; and he made himself acquainted with all the laws of Norway, and showed in everything great prudence and understanding. What a valuable man King Eystein was, how full of friendship, and how much he turned his mind to examining and avoiding everything that could be of disadvantage to his friends, may be seen from his friendship to an Iceland man called Ivar Ingimundson. The man was witty, of great family, and also a poet. The king saw that Ivar was out of spirits,

and asked him why he was so melancholy. "Before, when thou wast with us, we had much amusement with thy conversation. I know thou art a man of too good an understanding to believe that I would do anything against thee. Tell me then what it is."

He replied, "I cannot tell thee what it is."

Then said the king, "I will try to guess what it is. Are there any men who displease thee?"

To this he replied, "No."

"Dost thou think thou art held in less esteem by me than thou wouldst like to be?"

To this he also replied, "No."

"Hast thou observed anything whatever that has made an impression on thee at which thou art ill pleased?"

He replied, it was not this either.

The king: "Would you like to go to other chiefs or to other men?"

To this he answered, "No."

The king: "It is difficult now to guess. Is there any girl here, or in any other country, to whom thy affections are engaged?"

He said it was so.

The king said, "Do not be melancholy on that account. Go to Iceland when spring sets in, and I shall give thee money, and presents, and with these my letters and seal to the men who have the principal sway there; and I know no man there who will not obey my persuasions or threats."

Ivar replied, "My fate is heavier, sire; for my own brother has the girl."

Then said the king, "Throw it out of thy mind; and I know a counsel against this. After Yule I will travel in guest-quarters. Thou shalt come along with me, and thou will have an opportunity of seeing many beautiful girls; and, provided they are not of the royal stock, I will get thee one of them in marriage."

Ivar replies, "Sire, my fate is still the heavier; for as oft as I see beautiful and excellent girls I only remember the more that girl, and they increase my misery."

The king: "Then I will give thee property to manage, and estates for thy amusement."

He replied, "For that I have no desire."

The king: "Then I will give thee money, that thou mayest travel in other countries."

He said he did not wish this.

Then said the king, "It is difficult for me to seek farther, for I have proposed everything that occurs to me. There is but one thing else; and that is but little compared to what I have offered thee. Come to me every day after the tables are removed, and, if I am not sitting upon important business, I shall talk with thee about the girl in every way that I can think of; and I shall do so at leisure. It sometimes happens that sorrow is lightened by being brought out openly; and thou shalt never go away without some gift."

He replied, "This I will do, sire, and return thanks for this inquiry."

And now they did so constantly; and when the king was not occupied with weightier affairs he talked with him, and his sorrow by degrees wore away, and he was again in good spirits.

19.—OF KING SIGURD.

King Sigurd was a stout and strong man, with brown hair; of a manly appearance, but not handsome; well grown; of little speech, and often not friendly, but good to his friends, and faithful; not very eloquent, but moral and polite. King Sigurd was self-willed, and severe in his revenge; strict in observing the law; was generous; and withal an able, powerful king. His brother Olaf was a tall, thin man; handsome in countenance; lively, modest, and popular. When all these brothers, Eystein, Sigurd and Olaf were kings of Norway, they did away with many burthens which the Danes had laid upon the people in the time that Svein Alfifason ruled Norway; and on this account they were much beloved, both by the people and the great men of the country.

20.—OF KING SIGURD'S DREAM.

Once King Sigurd fell into low spirits, so that few could get him to converse, and he sat but a short time at the drinking table. This was heavy on his counsellors, friends, and court; and they begged King Eystein to consider how they could discover the cause why the people who came to the king could get no reply to what they laid before him. King Eystein answered them, that it was difficult to speak with the king about this; but at last, on the entreaty of many, he promised to do it. Once, when they were both together, King Eystein brought the matter before his brother, and asked the cause of his melancholy. "It is a great grief, sire, to many to see thee so melancholy; and we would like to know what has occa-

sioned it, or if perchance thou hast heard any news of great weight?"

King Sigurd replies, that it was not so.

"Is it then, brother," says King Eystein, "that you would like to travel out of the country, and augment your dominions as our father did?"

He answered, that it was not that either.

"Is it, then, that any man here in the country has offended?"

To this also the king said "No."

"Then I would like to know if you have dreamt anything that has occasioned this depression of mind?"

The king answered that it was so.

"Tell me, then, brother, thy dream."

King Sigurd said, "I will not tell it, unless thou interpret it as it may turn out; and I shall be quick at perceiving if thy interpretation be right or not."

King Eystein replies, "This is a very difficult matter, sire, on both sides; as I am exposed to thy anger if I cannot interpret it, and to the blame of the public if I can do nothing in the matter; but I will rather fall under your displeasure, even if my interpretation should not be agreeable."

King Sigurd replies, "It appeared to me, in a dream, as if we brothers were all sitting on a bench in front of Christ church in Throndhjem; and it appeared to me as if our relative, King Olaf the Saint, came out of the church adorned with the royal raiment glancing and splendid, and with the most delightful and joyful countenance. He went to our brother King Olaf, took him

by the hand, and said cheerfully to him, 'Come with me, friend.' On which he appeared to stand up and go into the church. Soon after King Olaf the Saint came out of the church, but not so gay and brilliant as before. Now he went to thee, brother, and said to thee that thou shouldst go with him; on which he led thee with him, and ye went into the church. Then I thought, and waited for it, that he would come to me, and meet me; but it was not so. Then I was seized with great sorrow, and great dread and anxiety fell upon me, so that I was altogether without strength; and then I awoke."

King Eystein replies, "Thus I interpret your dream, sire,—That the bench betokens the kingdom we brothers have; and as you thought King Olaf came with so glad a countenance to our brother, King Olaf, he will likely live the shortest time of us brothers, and have all good to expect hereafter; for he is amiable, young in years, and has gone but little into excess, and King Olaf the Saint must help him. But as you thought he came towards me, but not with so much joy, I may possibly live a few years longer, but not become old, and I trust his providence will stand over me; but that he did not come to me with the same splendour and glory as to our brother Olaf, that will be because, in many ways, I have sinned and transgressed his command. If he delayed coming to thee, I think that in no way betokens thy death, but rather a long life; but it may be that some heavy accident may occur to thee, as there was an unaccountable dread overpowering thee; but I foretell that thou will be the oldest of us, and wilt rule the kingdom longest."

Then said Sigurd, "This is well and intelligently interpreted, and it is likely it will be so." And now the king began to be cheerful again.

21.—OF KING SIGURD'S MARRIAGE.

King Sigurd married Malmfrid, a daughter of King Harald Valdemarson, eastward in Novgorod. King Harald Valdemarson's mother was Queen Gyda the Old, a daughter of the Swedish king, Inge Steinkelson. Harald Valdemarson's other daughter, sister to Malmfrid, was Ingebjorg, who was married to Canute Lavard, a son of the Danish king, Eirik the Good, and grandson of King Svein Ulfson. Canute's and Ingebjorg's children were, the Danish king, Valdemar, who came to the Danish kingdom after Svein Eirikson; and daughters Margaret, Christina, and Catherine. Margaret was married to Stig Hvitaled; and their daughter was Christina, married to the Swedish king, Karl Sorkvison, and their son was King Sorkver.

22.—OF THE CASES BEFORE THE THING.

The king's relative, Sigurd Hranason, came into strife with King Sigurd. He had had the Lapland collectorship on the king's account, because of their relationship and long friendship, and also of the many services Sigurd Hranason had done to the kings; for he was a very distinguished, popular man. But it happened to him, as it often does to others, that persons more wicked and jealous than upright slandered him to King Sigurd, and whispered in the king's ear that he took more of the Lap-

lander's tribute to himself than was proper. They spoke so long about this, that King Sigurd conceived a dislike and anger to him, and sent a message to him. When he appeared before the king, the king carried these feelings with him, and said, "I did not expect that thou shouldst have repaid me for thy great fiefs and other dignities by taking the king's property, and abstracting a greater portion of it than is allowable."

Sigurd Hranason replies, "It is not true that has been told you; for I have only taken such portion as I had your permission to take."

King Sigurd replies, "Thou shalt not slip away with this; but the matter shall be seriously treated before it comes to an end." With that they parted.

Soon after, by the advice of his friends, the king laid an action against Sigurd Hranason at the Thing-meeting in Bergen, and would have him made an outlaw. Now when the business took this turn, and appeared so dangerous, Sigurd Hranason went to King Eystein, and told him what mischief King Sigurd intended to do him, and entreated his assistance. King Eystein replied. "This is a difficult matter that you propose to me, to speak against my brother; and there is a great difference between defending a cause and pursuing it in law;" and added, that this was a matter which concerned him and Sigurd equally. "But for thy distress, and our relationship, I shall bring in a word for thee."

Soon after Eystein visited King Sigurd, and entreated him to spare the man, reminding him of the relationship between them and Sigurd Hranason, who was married

to their aunt, Skialdvor; and said he would pay the penalty for the crime committed against the king, although he could not with truth impute any blame to him in the matter. Besides, he reminded the king of the long friendship with Sigurd Hranason. King Sigurd replied, that it was better government to punish such acts. Then King Eystein replied, "If thou, brother, wilt follow the law, and punish such acts according to the country's privileges, then it would be most correct that Sigurd Hranason produce his witnesses, and that the case be judged at the Thing, but not at a meeting; for the case comes under the law of the land, not under Bjarkey law." Then said Sigurd, "It may possibly be so that the case belongs to it, as thou sayest, King Eystein; and if it be against law what has hitherto been done in this case, then we shall bring it before the Thing." Then the kings parted, and each seemed determined to take his own way. King Sigurd summoned the parties in the case before the Arnarnes Thing, and intended to pursue it there. King Eystein came also to the Thing-place; and when the case was brought forward for judgment, King Eystein went to the Thing before judgment was given upon Sigurd Hranason. Now King Sigurd told the lagmen to pronounce the judgment; but King Eystein replied thus: "I trust there are here men acquainted sufficiently with the laws of Norway, to know that they cannot condemn a lendermen to be outlawed at this Thing." And he then explained how the law was, so that every man clearly understood it. Then said King Sigurd, "Thou art taking up this matter very warmly, King Eystein, and it is likely

the case will cost more trouble before it comes to an end than we intended; but nevertheless we shall follow it out. I will have him condemned to be outlawed in his native place." Then said King Eystein, "There are certainly not many things which do not succeed with thee, and especially when there are but few and small folks to oppose one who has carried through such great things." And thus they parted, without anything being concluded in the case. Thereafter King Sigurd called together a Gula Thing, went himself there, and summoned to him many high chiefs. King Eystein came there also with his suite; and many meetings and conferences were held among people of understanding concerning this case, and it was tried and examined before the lagmen. Now King Eystein objected that all the parties summoned in any cases tried here belonged to the Thing-district; but in this case the deed and the parties belonged to Halogaland. The Thing accordingly ended in doing nothing, as King Eystein had thus made it incompetent. The kings parted in great wrath; and King Eystein went north to Throndhjem. King Sigurd, on the other hand, summoned to him all lendermen, and also the house-servants of the lendermen, and named out of every district a number of the bondes from the south parts of the country, so that he had collected a large army about him; and proceeded with all this crowd northwards along the coast to Halogaland, and intended to use all his power to make Sigurd Hranason an outlaw among his own relations. For this purpose he summoned to him the Halogaland and Naumudal people, and appointed a Thing at Hrafnista. King Eystein prepared

himself also, and proceeded with many people from the town of Nidaros to the Thing, where he made Sigurd Hranason, by hand-shake before witnesses, deliver over to him the following and defending this case. At this Thing both the kings spoke, each for his own side. Then King Eystein asks the lagmen where that law was made in Norway which gave the bondes the right to judge between the kings of the country, when they had pleas with each other. "I shall bring witnesses to prove that Sigurd has given the case into my hands; and it is with me, not with Sigurd Hranason, that King Sigurd has to do in this case." The lagmen said that disputes between kings must be judged only at the Eyra Thing in Nidaros.

King Eystein said, "So I thought that it should be there, and the cases must be removed there."

Then King Sigurd said, "The more difficulties and inconvenience thou bringest upon me in this matter, the more I will persevere in it." And with that they parted.

Both kings then went south to Nidaros town, where they summoned a Thing from eight districts. King Eystein was in the town with a great many people, but Sigurd was on board his ships. When the Thing was opened, peace and safe conduct was given to all; and when the people were all collected, and the case should be gone into, Bergthor, a son of Svein Bryggjufot, stood up, and gave his evidence that Sigurd Hranason had concealed a part of the Laplanders' taxes.

Then King Eystein stood up and said, "If thy accusation were true, although we do not know what truth there may be in thy testimony, yet this case has already been

dismissed from three Things, and a fourth time from a town meeting; and therefore I require that the lagmen acquit Sigurd in this case according to law." And they did so.

Then said King Sigurd, "I see sufficiently, King Eystein, that thou hast carried this case by law-quirks,[1] which I do not understand. But now there remains, King Eystein, a way of determining the case which I am more used to, and which I shall now apply."

He then retired to his ships, had the tents taken down, laid his whole fleet out at the holm, and held a Thing of his people; and told them that early in the morning they should land at Iluvellir, and give battle to King Eystein. But in the evening, as King Sigurd sat at his table in his ship taking his repast, before he was aware of it a man cast himself on the floor of the forehold, and at the king's feet. This was Sigurd Hranason, who begged the king to take what course with regard to him the king himself thought proper. Then came Bishop Magne and Queen Malmfrid, and many other great personages, and entreated forgiveness for Sigurd Hranason; and at their entreaty the king raised him up, took him by the hand, and placed him among his men, and took him along with himself to the south part of the country. In autumn the king gave Sigurd Hranason leave to go north to his farm, gave him an employment, and was always afterward his friend. After this day, however, the brothers were never much together, and there was no cordiality or cheerfulness among them.

[1]These law-quirks show a singularly advanced state of law, and deference to the Law Things, amidst such social disorder and misdeeds.—L.

23.—OF KING OLAF'S DEATH.

King Olaf Magnuson fell into a sickness which ended in his death. He was buried in Christ church in Nidaros, and many were in great grief at his death. After Olaf's death, Eystein and Sigurd ruled the country, the three brothers together having been kings of Norway for twelve years (1104-1115); namely, five years after King Sigurd returned home, and seven years before. King Olaf was seventeen years old when he died, and it happened on the 24th of December.

24.—MAGNUS THE BLIND; HIS BIRTH.

King Eystein had been about a year in the east part of the country at that time, and King Sigurd was then in the north. King Eystein remained a long time that winter in Sarpsborg. There was once a powerful and rich bonde called Olaf of Dal, who dwelt in Great Dal in Aumord, and had two children,—a son called Hakon Fauk, and a daughter called Borghild, who was a very beautiful girl, and prudent, and well skilled in many things. Olaf and his children were a long time in winter in Sarpsborg, and Borghild conversed very often with King Eystein; so that many reports were spread about their frendship. The following summer King Eystein went north, and King Sigurd came eastward, where he remained all winter, and was long in Konungahella, which town he greatly enlarged and improved. He built there a great castle of turf and stone, dug a great ditch around it, and built a church and several houses within the castle. The holy cross he allowed to remain at Konungahella, and

therein did not fulfill the oath he had taken in Palestine; but, on the other hand, he established tithe, and most of the other things to which he had bound himself by oath. The reason of his keeping the cross east at the frontier of the country was, that he thought it would be a protection to all the land; but it proved the greatest misfortune to place this relic within the power of the heathens, as it afterwards turned out.

When Borghild, Olaf's daughter, heard it whispered that people talked ill of her conversations and intimacy with King Eystein, she went to Sarpsborg; and after suitable fasts she carried the iron as proof of her innocence, and cleared herself thereby fully from all offence. When King Sigurd heard this, he rode one day as far as usually was two days' travelling, and came to Dal to Olaf, where he remained all night, made Borghild his concubine, and took her away with him. They had a son, who was called Magnus, and he was sent immediately to Halogaland, to be fostered at Bjarkey by Vidkun Jonson; and he was brought up there. Magnus grew up to be the handsomest man that could be seen, and was very soon stout and strong.

25.—COMPARISON BETWEEN THE TWO KINGS.

King Eystein and King Sigurd went both in spring to guest-quarters in the Uplands; and each was entertained in a separate house, and the houses were not very distant from each other. The bondes, however, thought it more convenient that both should be entertained together by turns in each house; and thus they were both at first in

the house of King Eystein. But in the evening, when the people began to drink, the ale was not good; so that the guests were very quiet and still. Then said King Eystein, "Why are the people so silent? It is more usual in drinking parties that people are merry, so let us fall upon some jest over our ale that will amuse people; for surely, brother Sigurd, all people are well pleased when we talk cheerfully."

Sigurd replies, bluntly, "Do you talk as much as you please, but give me leave to be silent."

Eystein says, "It is a common custom over the ale-table to compare one person with another, and now let us do so." Then Sigurd was silent.

"I see," says King Eystein, "that I must begin this amusement. Now I will take thee, brother, to compare myself with, and will make it appear so as if we had both equal reputation and property, and that there is no difference in our birth and education."

Then King Sigurd replies, "Do you remember that I was always able to throw you when we wrestled, although you are a year older?"

Then King Eystein replied, "But I remember that you was not so good at the games which require agility."

Sigurd: "Do you remember that I could drag you under water, when we swam together, as often as I pleased?"

Eystein: "But I could swim as far as you, and could dive as well as you; and I could run upon snow-skates so well that nobody could beat me, and you could no more do it than an ox."

Sigurd: "Methinks it is a more useful and suitable accomplishment for a chief to be expert at his bow; and I think you could scarcely draw my bow, even if you took your foot to help."

Eystein: "I am not strong at the bow as you are, but there is less difference between our shooting near; and I can use the skees much better than you, and in former times that was held a great accomplishment."

Sigurd: "It appears to me much better for a chief who is to be the superior of other men, that he is conspicuous in a crowd, and strong and powerful in weapons above other men; easily seen, and easily known, where there are many together."

Eystein: "It is not less a distinction and an ornament that a man is of a handsome appearance, so as to be easily known from others on that account; and this appears to me to suit a chief best, because the best ornament is allied to beauty. I am moreover more knowing in the law than you, and on every subject my words flow more easily than yours."

Sigurd: "It may be that you know more law-quirks, for I have had something else to do; neither will any deny you a smooth tongue. But there are many who say that your words are not to be trusted; that what you promise is little to be regarded; and that you talk just according to what those who are about you say, which is not kingly."

Eystein: "This is because, when people bring their cases before me, I wish first to give every man that satisfaction in his affairs which he desires; but afterwards

comes the opposite party, and then there is something to be given or taken away very often, in order to mediate between them, so that both may be satisfied. It often happens, too, that I promise whatever is desired of me, that all may be joyful about me. It would be an easy matter for me to do as you do,—to promise evil to all; and I never hear any complain of your not keeping this promise to them."

Sigurd: "It is the conversation of all that the expedition that I made out of the country was a princely expedition, while you in the meantime sat at home like your father's daughter."

Eystein: "Now you touched the tender spot. I would not have brought up this conversation if I had not known what to reply on this point. I can truly say that I equipt you from home like a sister, before you went upon this expedition."

Sigurd: "You must have heard that on this expedition I was in many a battle in the Saracen's land, and gained the victory in all; and you must have heard of the many valuable articles I acquired, the like of which were never seen before in this country, and I was the most respected wherever the most gallant men were; and, on the other hand, you cannot conceal that you have only a home-bred reputation."

Eystein: "I have heard that you had several battles abroad, but it was more useful for the country what I was doing in the meantime here at home. I built five churches from the foundations, and a harbour out at Agdanes, where it before was impossible to land, and where vessels

ply north and south along the coast. I set a warping post and iron ring in the sound of Sinholm, and in Bergen I built a royal hall, while you were killing bluemen for the devil in Serkland. This, I think, was of but little advantage to our kingdom."

King Sigurd said: "On this expedition I went all the way to Jordan and swam across the river. On the edge of the river there is a bush of willows, and there I twisted a knot of willows, and said this knot thou shouldst untie, brother, or take the curse thereto attached."

King Eystein said: "I shall not go and untie the knot which you tied for me; but if I had been inclined to tie a knot for thee, thou wouldst not have been king of Norway at thy return to this country, when with a single ship you came sailing into my fleet."

Thereupon both were silent, and there was anger on both sides. More things passed between the brothers, from which it appeared that each of them would be greater than the other; however, peace was preserved between them as long as they lived.

26.—OF KING SIGURD'S SICKNESS.

King Sigurd was at a feast in the Upland, and a bath was made ready for him. When the king came to the bath and the tent was raised over the bathing-tub, the king thought there was a fish in the tub beside him; and a great laughter came upon him, so that he was beside himself, and was out of his mind, and often afterwards these fits returned.

Magnus Barefoot's daughter, Ragnhild, was married

by her brothers to Harald Kesia, a son of the Danish king, Eirik the Good; and their sons were Magnus, Olaf, Knut and Harald.

27.—OF KING EYSTEIN'S DEATH.

King Eystein built a large ship at Nidaros, which, in size and shape, was like the Long Serpent which King Olaf Trygvason had built. At the stem there was a dragon's head, and at the stern a crooked tail, and both were gilded over. The ship was high-sided; but the fore and aft parts appeared less than they should be. He also made in Nidaros many and large dry-docks of the best material, and well timbered.

Six years after King Olaf's death, it happened that King Eystein, at a feast at Hustadir in Stim, was seized with an illness which soon carried him off. He died the 29th of August, 1123, and his body was carried north to Nidaros, and buried in Christ church; and it is generally said that so many mourners never stood over any man's grave in Norway as over King Eystein's, at least since the time Magnus the Good, Saint Olaf's son, died. Eystein had been twenty years (1104-1123) king of Norway: and after his decease his brother, King Sigurd, was the sole king of Norway as long as he lived.

28.—BAPTIZING THE PEOPLE OF SMALAND.

The Danish king, Nikolas, a son of Svein Ulfson, married afterwards the Queen Margaret, a daughter of King Inge, who had before been married to King Magnus Barefoot; and their sons were Nikolas and Magnus the Strong.

King Nikolas sent a message to King Sigurd the Crusader, and asked him if he would go with him with all his might and help him to the east of the Swedish dominion, to Smaland, to baptize the inhabitants; for the people who dwelt there had no regard for Christianity, although some of them had allowed themselves to be baptized. At that time there were many people all around in the Swedish dominions who were heathens, and many were bad Christians; for there were some of the kings who renounced Christianity, and continued heathen sacrifices, as Blotsvein, and afterwards Eirik Arsale, had done. King Sigurd promised to undertake this journey, and the kings appointed their meeting at Eyrarsund. King Sigurd then summoned all people in Norway to a levy, both of men and ships; and when the fleet was assembled he had about 300 ships. King Nikolas came very early to the meeting-place, and stayed there a long time; and the bondes murmured much, and said the Northmen did not intend to come. Thereupon the Danish army dispersed, and the king went away with all his fleet. King Sigurd came there soon afterwards, and was ill pleased; but sailed east to Svimraros, and held a House-thing, at which Sigurd spoke about King Nikolas's breach of faith, and the Northmen, on this account, determined to go marauding in his country. They first plundered a village called Tumathorp, which is not far from Lund; and then sailed east to the merchant-town of Calmar, where they plundered, as well as in Smaland, and imposed on the country a tribute of 1500 cattle for ship provision; and the people of Smaland received Christianity. After this

King Sigurd turned about with his fleet, and came back to his kingdom with many valuable articles and great booty, which he had gathered on this expedition; and this levy was called the Calmar levy. This was the summer before the eclipse. This was the only levy King Sigurd carried out as long as he was king.

29.—OF THORARIN STUTFELD.

It happened once when King Sigurd was going from the drinking-table to vespers, that his men were very drunk and merry; and many of them sat outside the church singing the evening song, but their singing was very irregular. Then the king said, "Who is that fellow I see standing at the church with a skin jacket on?" They answered, that they did not know. Then the king said:—

"This skin-clad man, in sorry plight,
Puts all our wisdom here to flight."

Then the fellow came forward and said:—

"I thought that here I might be known,
Although my dress is scanty grown.
'Tis poor, but I must be content:
Unless, great king, it's thy intent
To give me better; for I have seen
When I and rags had strangers been."

The king answered, "Come to me to-morrow when I am at the drink-table." The night passed away; and the morning after the Icelander, who was afterwards called Thorarin Stutfeld, went into the drinking-room. A man stood outside of the door of the room with a horn in his hand, and said, "Icelander! the king says that if thou wilt deserve any gift from him thou shalt compose a song before going in, and make it about a man whose name is Hakon Serkson, and who is called Morstrut;[1] and speak

[1]Morstrut is a short, fat, punchy fellow.—L.

about that surname in thy song." The man who spoke to him was called Arne Fioruskeif. Then they went into the room; and when Thorarin came before the king's seat he recited these verses: —

"Throndhjem's warrior-king has said
The skald should be by gifts repaid,
If he before this meeting gave
The king's friend Serk a passing stave.

The generous king has let me know
My stave, to please, must be framed so
That my poor verse extol the fame
Of one called Hakon Lump by name."

Then said the king, "I never said so, and somebody has been making a mock of thee. Hakon himself shall determine what punishment thou shalt have. Go into his suite." Hakon said, "He shall be welcome among us, for I can see where the joke came from;" and he placed the Icelander at his side next to himself, and they were very merry. The day was drawing to a close, and the liquor began to get into their heads, when Hakon said, "Dost thou not think, Icelander, that thou owest me some penalty? and dost thou not see that some trick has been played upon thee?"

Thorarin replies, "It is true, indeed, that I owe thee some compensation."

Hakon says, "Then we shall be quits, if thou wilt make me another stave about Arne."

He said he was ready to do so; and they crossed over to the side of the room where Arne was sitting, and Thorarin gave these verses:—

"Fioruskeif has often spread,
With evil heart and idle head,
The eagle's voidings round the land,
Lampoons and lies, with ready hand.

Yet this landlouper we all know,
In Africa scarce fed a crow.
Of all his arms used in the field,
Those in most use were helm and shield."

Arne sprang up instantly, drew his sword, and was going to fall upon him; but Hakon told him to let it alone

and be quiet, and bade him remember that if it came to a quarrel he would come off the worst himself.

Thorarin afterwards went up to the king, and said he had composed a poem which he wished the king to hear. The king consented, and the song is known by the name of the Stutfeld poem. The king asked Thorarin what he intended to do. He replied, it was his intention to go to Rome. Then the king gave him much money for his pilgrimage, and told him to visit him on his return, and promised to provide for him.

30.—OF SIGURD AND OTTAR BIRTING.

It is told that King Sigurd, one Whitsunday, sat at table with many people, among whom were many of his friends; and when he came to his high-seat, people saw that his countenance was very wild, and as if he had been weeping, so that people were afraid of what might follow. The king rolled his eyes, and looked at those who were seated on the benches. Then he seized the holy book which he had brought with him from abroad, and which was written all over with gilded letters; so that never had such a costly book come to Norway. His queen sat by his side. Then said King Sigurd, "Many are the changes which may take place during a man's lifetime. I had two things which were dear to me above all when I came from abroad, and these were this book and the queen; and now I think the one is only worse and more loathsome than the other, and nothing I have belonging to me that I more detest. The queen does not know herself how hideous she is; for a goat's horn is standing out on her head, and

the better I liked her before the worse I like her now. Thereupon he cast the book on the fire which was burning on the hall-floor, and gave the queen a blow with his fist between the eyes. The queen wept; but more at the king's illness than at the blow, or the affront she had suffered.

Then a man stood up before the king: his name was Ottar Birting; and he was one of the torch-bearers, although a bonde's son, and was on service that day He was of small stature, but of agreeable appearance; lively, bold, and full of fun; black haired, and of a dark skin. He ran and snatched the book which the king had cast into the fire, held it out, and said, "Different were the days, sire, when you came with great state and splendour to Norway, and with great fame and honour; for then all your friends came to meet you with joy, and were glad at your coming. All as one man would have you for king, and have you in the highest regard and honour. But now days of sorrow are come over us; for on this holy festival many of your friends have come to you, and cannot be cheerful on account of your melancholy and ill health. It is much to be desired that you would be merry with them; and do, good king, take this saving advice,—make peace first with the queen, and make her joyful whom you have so highly affronted, with a friendly word; and then all your chiefs, friends, and servants: that is my advice."

Then said King Sigurd, "Dost thou dare to give me advice, thou great lump of a houseman's lad!" And he sprang up, drew his sword, and swung it with both hands as if going to cut him down.

But Ottar stood quiet and upright; did not stir from the spot, nor show the slightest sign of fear; and the king turned round the sword-blade which he had waved over Ottar's head, and gently touched him on the shoulder with it. Then he sat down in silence on his high-seat.

All were silent who were in the hall, for nobody dared to say a word. Now the king looked around him, milder than before, and said, "It is difficult to know what there is in people. Here sat my friends, and lendermen, marshals and shield-bearers, and all the best men in the land; but none did so well against me as this man, who appears to you of little worth compared to any of you, although now he loves me most. I came here like a madman, and would have destroyed my precious property; but he turned aside my deed, and was not afraid of death for it. Then he made an able speech, ordering his words so that they were honourable to me, and not saying a single word about things which could increase my vexation; but even avoiding what might, with truth, have been said. So excellent was his speech, that no man here, however great his understanding, could have spoken better. Then I sprang up in a pretended rage, and made as if I would have cut him down; but he was courageous as if he had nothing to fear: and seeing that, I let go my purpose; for he was altogether innocent. Now ye shall know, my friends, how I intend to reward him: he was before my torch-bearer, and shall now be my lenderman; and there shall follow what is still more, that he shall be the most distinguished of my lendermen. Go thou and sit among the lendermen, and be a servant no longer."

Ottar became one of the most celebrated men in Norway for various good and praiseworthy deeds.

31.—OF KING SIGURD'S DREAM.

In King Sigurd's latter days he was once at an entertainment at one of his farms; and in the morning when he was dressed he was silent and still, so that his friends were afraid he was not able to govern himself. Now the farm-bailiff, who was a man of good sense and courage, brought him into conversation, and asked if he had heard any news of such importance that it disturbed his mirth; or if the entertainment had not satisfied him; or if there was anything else that people could remedy.

King Sigurd said, that none of the things he had mentioned was the cause. "But it is that I think upon the dream I had in the night."

"Sire," replied he, "may it prove a lucky dream! I would gladly hear it."

The king: "I thought that I was in Jadar, and looked out towards the sea; and that I saw something very black moving itself; and when it came near it appeared to be a large tree, of which the branches stretched far above the water, and the roots were down in the sea. Now when the tree came to the shore it broke into pieces, and drove all about the land, both the mainland and the out-islands, rocks and strands; and it appeared to me as if I saw over all Norway along the sea-coast, and saw pieces of that tree, some small and some large, driven into every bight."

Then said the bailiff, "It is likely that you can best interpret this dream yourself; and I would willingly hear your interpretation of it."

Then said the king, "This dream appears to me to denote the arrival in this country of some man who will fix his seat here, and whose posterity will spread itself over the land; but with unequal power, as the dream shows."

32.—OF ASLAK HANE.

It so happened once, that King Sigurd sat in a gloomy mood among many worthy men. It was Friday evening, and the kitchen-master asked what meat should be made ready.

The king replies, "What else but flesh-meat?" And so harsh were his words that nobody dared to contradict him, and all were ill at ease. Now when people prepared to go to table, dishes of warm flesh-meat were carried in; but all were silent, and grieved at the king's illness. Before the blessing was pronounced over the meat, a man called Aslak Hane spoke. He had been a long time with King Sigurd on his journey abroad, and was not a man of any great family; and was small of stature, but fiery. When he perceived how it was, and that none dared to accost the king, he asked, "What is it, sire, that is smoking on the dish before you?"

The king replies, "What do you mean, Aslak? what do you think it is?"

Aslak: "I think it is flesh-meat; and I would it were not so."

The king: "But if it be so, Aslak?"

He replied, "It would be vexatious to know that a gallant king, who has gained so much honour in the world, should so forget himself. When you rose up out of Jor-

dan, after bathing in the same waters as God himself, with palm-leaves in your hands, and the cross upon your breast, it was something else you promised, sire, than to eat flesh-meat on a Friday. If a meaner man were to do so, he would merit a heavy punishment. This royal hall is not so beset as it should be, when it falls upon me, a mean man, to challenge such an act."

The king sat silent, and did not partake of the meat; and when the time for eating was drawing to an end, the king ordered the flesh dishes to be removed and other food was brought in, such as it is permitted to use. When the meal-time was almost past, the king began to be cheerful, and to drink. People advised Aslak to fly, but he said he would not do so. "I do not see how it could help me; and, to tell the truth, it is as good to die now that I have got my will, and have prevented the king from committing a sin. It is for him to kill me if he likes."

Towards evening the king called him, and said, "Who set thee on, Aslak Hane, to speak such free words to me in the hearing of so many people?"

"No one, sire, but myself."

The king: "Thou wouldst like, no doubt, to know what thou art to have for such boldness: what thinkest thou it deserves."

He replies, "If it be well rewarded, sire, I shall be glad; but should it be otherwise, then it is your concern."

Then the king said, "Smaller is thy reward than thou hast deserved. I give thee three farms. It has turned out, what could not have been expected, that thou hast prevented me from a great crime,—thou, and not the lender-

men, who are indebted to me for so much good." And so it ended.

33.—OF A WOMAN BROUGHT TO THE KING.

One Yule eve the king sat in the hall, and the tables were laid out; and the king said, "Get me flesh-meat."

They answered, "Sire, it is not the custom to eat flesh-meat on Yule eve."

The king said, "If it be not the custom I will make it the custom."

They went out, and brought him a dolphin. The king stuck his knife into it, but did not eat of it. Then the king said, "Bring me a girl here into the hall." They brought him a woman whose head-dress went far down her brows. The king took her hand in his hands, looked at her, and said, "An ill looking girl!"

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34.—HARALD GILLE COMES TO NORWAY.

Halkel Huk, a son of Jon Smiorbalte, who was lender-man in More, made a voyage in the West sea, all the way to the South Hebudes. A man came to him out of Ireland called Gillikrist, and gave himself out for a son of King Magnus Barefoot. His mother came with him, and said his other name was Harald. Halkel received the man, brought him to Norway with him, and went immediately to King Sigurd with Harald and his mother. When they had told their story to the king, he talked over the matter with his principal men, and bade them give their opinions upon it. They were of different opinions, and all left it

to the king himself, although there were several who opposed this; and the king followed his own counsel. King Sigurd ordered Harald to be called before him, and told him that he would not deny him the proof, by ordeal, of who his father was; but on condition that if he should prove his descent according to his claim, he should not desire the kingdom in the lifetime of King Sigurd, or of King Magnus: and to this he bound himself by oath. King Sigurd said he must tread over hot iron to prove his birth; but this ordeal was thought by many too severe, as he was to undergo it merely to prove his father, and without getting the kingdom; but Harald agreed to it, and fixed on the trial by iron: and this ordeal was the greatest ever made in Norway; for nine glowing plowshares were laid down, and Harald went over them with bare feet, attended by two bishops.

Three days after the iron trial the ordeal was taken to proof, and the feet were found unburnt. Thereafter King Sigurd acknowledged Harald's relationship; but his son Magnus conceived a great hatred of him, and in this many chiefs followed Magnus. King Sigurd trusted so much to his favour with the whole people of the country, that he desired all men, under oath, to promise to accept King Magnus after him as their king; and all the people took this oath.

35.—RACE BETWEEN MAGNUS AND HARALD GILLE.

Harald Gille was a tall, slender-grown man, of a long neck and face, black eyes, and dark hair, brisk and quick; and wore generally the Irish dress of short light clothes.

The Norse language was difficult for Harald, and he brought out words which many laughed at. Harald sat late drinking one evening. He spoke with another man about different things in the west in Ireland; and among other things, said that there were men in Ireland so swift of foot that no horse could overtake them in running. Magnus, the king's son, heard this, and said, "Now he is lying, as he usually does."

Harald replies, "It is true that there are men in Ireland whom no horse in Norway could overtake." They exchanged some words about this, and both were drunk. Then said Magnus, "Thou shalt make a wager with me, and stake thy head if thou canst not run so fast as I ride upon my horse, and I shall stake my gold ring."

Harald replies, "I did not say that I could run so swiftly; but I said that men are to be found in Ireland who will run as fast; and on that I would wager."

The king's son Magnus replies, "I will not go to Ireland about it; we are wagering here, and not there."

Harald on this went to bed, and would not speak to him more about it. This was in Oslo. The following morning, when the early mass was over, Magnus rode up the street, and sent a message to Harald to come to him. When Harald came he was dressed thus. He had on a shirt and trousers which were bound with ribands under his foot-soles, a short cloak, an Irish hat on his head, and a spear-shaft in his hand. Magnus set up a mark for the race. Harald said, "Thou hast made the course too long;" but Magnus made it at once even much longer, and said it was still too short. There were many spectators. They

began the race, and Harald followed always the horse's pace; and when they came to the end of the race course, Magnus said, "Thou hadst hold of the saddle-girth, and the horse dragged thee along." Magnus had his swift runner, the Gautland horse. They began the race again, and Harald ran the whole race-course before the horse. When they came to the end Harald asked, "Had I hold of the saddle-girths now?"

Magnus replied, "Thou hadst the start at first."

Then Magnus let his horse breathe a while, and when he was ready he put the spurs to him, and set off in full gallop. Harald stood still, and Magnus looked back, and called, "Set off now."

Then Harald ran quickly past the horse, and came to the end of the course so long before him that he lay down, and got up and saluted Magnus as he came in.

Then they went home to the town. In the meantime King Sigurd had been at high mass, and knew nothing of this until after he had dined that day. Then he said to Magnus angrily, "Thou callest Harald useless; but I think thou art a great fool, and knowest nothing of the customs of foreign people. Dost thou not know that men in other countries exercise themselves in other feats than in filling themselves with ale, and making themselves mad, and so unfit for everything that they scarcely know each other? Give Harald his ring, and do not try to make a fool of him again, as long as I am above ground."

36.—OF SIGURD'S SWIMMING.

It happened once that Sigurd was out in his ship, which

lay in the harbour; and there lay a merchant ship, which was an Iceland trader, at the side of it. Harald Gille was in the forecastle of the king's ship, and Svein Rimhildson, a son of Knut Sveinson of Jadar, had his berth the next before him. There was also Sigurd Sigurdson, a gallant lenderman, who himself commanded a ship. It was a day of beautiful weather and warm sunshine, and many went out to swim, both from the long-ship and the merchant vessel. An Iceland man, who was among the swimmers, amused himself by drawing those under water who could not swim so well as himself; and at that the spectators laughed. When King Sigurd saw and heard this, he cast off his clothes, sprang into the water, and swam to the Icelander, seized him, and pressed him under the water, and held him there; and as soon as the Icelander came up the king pressed him down again, and thus the one time after the other.

Then said Sigurd Sigurdson, "Shall we let the king kill this man?"

Somebody said, "No one has any wish to interfere."

Sigurd replies, that "If Dag Eilifson were here, we should not be without one who dared."

Then Sigurd sprang overboard, swam to the king, took hold of him, and said, "Sire, do not kill the man. Everybody sees that you are a much better swimmer."

The king replies, "Let me loose, Sigurd; I shall be his death, for he will destroy our people under water."

Sigurd says, "Let us first amuse ourselves; and, Icelander, do thou set off to the land," which he did. The king now got loose from Sigurd, and swam to his ship,

and Sigurd went his way: but the king ordered that Sigurd should not presume to come into his presence; this was reported to Sigurd, and so he went up into the country.

37.—OF HARALD AND SVEIN RIMHILDSON.

In the evening, when people were going to bed, some of the ship's men were still at their games up in the country. Harald was with those who played on the land, and told his footboy to go out to the ship, make his bed, and wait for him there. The lad did as he was ordered. The king had gone to sleep; and as the boy thought Harald late, he laid himself in Harald's berth. Svein Rimhildson said, "It is a shame for brave men to be brought from their farms at home, and to have here serving boys to sleep beside them." The lad said that Harald had ordered him to come there. Svein Rimhildson said, "We do not so much care for Harald himself lying here, if he do not bring here his slaves and beggars;" and seized a riding-whip, and struck the boy on the head until the blood flowed from him. The boy ran immediately up the country, and told Harald what had happened, who went immediately out to the ship, to the aft part of the forecastle, and with a pole-axe struck Svein so that he received a severe wound on his hands; and then Harald went on shore. Svein ran to the land after him, and, gathering his friends, took Harald prisoner, and they were about hanging him. But while they were busy about this, Sigurd Sigurdson went out to the king's ship and awoke him. When the king opened his eyes and recognised Sigurd, he said, "For this

reason thou shalt die, that thou hast intruded into my presence; for thou knowest that I forbade thee:" and with these words the king sprang up.

Sigurd replied, "That is in your power as soon as you please; but other business is more urgent. Go to the land as quickly as possible to help thy brother; for the Rogaland people are going to hang him."

Then said the king, "God give us luck, Sigurd! Call my trumpeter, and let him call the people all to land, and to meet me."

The king sprang on the land, and all who knew him followed him to where the gallows was being erected. The king instantly took Harald to him; and all the people gathered to the king in full armour, as they heard the trumpet. Then the king ordered that Svein and all his comrades should depart from the country as outlaws; but by the intercession of good men the king was prevailed on to let them remain and hold their properties, but no mulct should be paid for Svein's wound.

Then Sigurd Sigurdson asked if the king wished that he should go forth out of the country.

"That will I not," said the king; "for I can never be without thee."

38.—OF KING OLAF'S MIRACLE.

There was a young and poor man called Kolbein; and Thora, King Sigurd the Crusader's mother, had ordered his tongue to be cut out of his mouth, and for no other cause than that this young man had taken a piece of meat out of the king-mother's tub which he said the cook had

given him, and which the cook had not ventured to serve up to her. The man had long gone about speechless. So says Einar Skulason in Olaf's ballad:—

"The proud rich dame, for little cause,
Had the lad's tongue cut from his jaws:
The helpless man, of speech deprived,
His dreadful sore wound scarce survived.
A few weeks since at Hlid was seen,
As well as ever he had been,
The same poor lad—to speech restored
By Olaf's power, whom he adored."

Afterwards the young man came to Nidaros, and watched in the Christ church; but at the second mass for Olaf before matins he fell asleep, and thought he saw King Olaf the Saint coming to him; and that Olaf talked to him, and took hold with his hands of the stump of his tongue and pulled it. Now when he awoke he found himself restored, and joyfully did he thank our Lord and the holy Saint Olaf, who had pitied and helped him; for he had come there speechless, and had gone to the holy shrine, and went away cured, and with his speech clear and distinct.

39.—KING OLAF'S MIRACLE WITH A PRISONER.

The heathens took prisoner a young man of Danish family and carried him to Vindland, where he was in fetters along with other prisoners. In the day-time he was alone in irons, without a guard; but at night a peasant's son was beside him in the chain, that he might not escape from them. This poor man never got sleep or rest from vexation and sorrow, and considered in many ways what could help him; for he had a great dread of slavery, and was pining with hunger and torture. He could not again

expect to be ransomed by his friends, as they had already restored him twice from heathen lands with their own money; and he well knew that it would be difficult and expensive for them to submit a third time to this burden. It is well with the man who does not undergo so much in the world as this man knew he had suffered. He saw but one way; and that was to get off and escape if he could. He resolved upon this in the night-time, killed the peasant, and cut his foot off after killing him: and set off to the forest with the chain upon his leg. Now when the people knew this, soon after daylight in the morning, they pursued him with two dogs accustomed to trace any one who escaped, and to find him in the forest however carefully he might be concealed. They got him into their hands and beat him, and did him all kinds of mischief; and dragging him home, left barely alive, and showed him no mercy. They tortured him severely; put him in a dark room, in which there lay already sixteen Chistian men; and bound him both with iron and other tyings, as fast as they could. Then he began to think that the misery and pain he had endured before were but shadows to his present sufferings. He saw no man before his eyes in this prison who would beg for mercy for him; no one had compassion on his wretchedness, except the Christian men who lay bound with him, who sorrowed with him, and bemoaned his fate together with their own misfortunes and helplessness. One day they advised him to make a vow to the holy King Olaf, to devote himself to some office in his sacred house, if he, by God's compassion and Saint Olaf's prayers could get away from this prison. He gladly

agreed to this, and made a vow and prepared himself for the situation they mentioned to him. The night after he thought in his sleep that he saw a man, not tall, standing at his side, who spoke to him thus, "Here, thou wretched man, why dost thou not get up?"

He replied, "Sir, who are you?"

"I am King Olaf, on whom thou hast called."

"Oh, my good lord! gladly would I raise myself; but I lie bound with iron and with chains on my legs, and also the other men who lie here."

Thereupon the king accosts him with the words, "Stand up at once and be not afraid; for thou art loose."

He awoke immediately, and told his comrades what had appeared to him in his dream. They told him to stand up, and try if it was true. He stood up, and observed that he was loose. Now said his fellow-prisoners, this would help him but little, for the door was locked both on the inside and on the outside. Then an old man who sat there in a deplorable condition put in his word, and told him not to doubt the mercy of the man who had loosened his chains: "For he has wrought this miracle on thee that thou shouldst enjoy his mercy, and hereafter be free, without suffering more misery and torture. Make haste, then, and seek the door; and if thou are able to slip out, thou art saved."

He did so, found the door open, slipped out, and away to the forest. As soon as the Vindland people were aware of this they set loose the dogs, and pursued him in great haste; and the poor man lay hid, and saw well where they were following him. But now the hounds lost the trace

when they came nearer, and all the eyes that sought him were struck with a blindness, so that nobody could find him, although he lay before their feet; and they all returned home, vexed that they could not find him. King Olaf did not permit this man's destruction after he had reached the forest, and restored him also to his health and hearing; for they had so long tortured and beaten him that he had become deaf. At last he came on board of a ship, with two other Christian men who had been long afflicted in that country. All of them worked zealously in this vessel, and so had a successful flight. Then he repaired to the holy man's house, strong and fit to bear arms. Now he was vexed at his vow, went from his promise to the holy king, ran away one day, and came in the evening to a bonde who gave him lodging for God's sake. Then in the night he saw three girls coming to him; and handsome and nobly dressed were they. They spoke to him directly, and sharply reprimanded him for having been so bold as to run from the good king who had shown so much compassion to him, first in freeing him from his irons, and then from the prison; and yet he had deserted the mild master into whose service he had entered. Then he awoke full of terror, got up early, and told the house-father his dream. The good man had nothing so earnest in life as to send him back to the holy place. This miracle was first written down by a man who himself saw the man, and the marks of the chains upon his body.

40.—KING SIGURD MARRIES CECILIA.

In the last period of King Sigurd's life, his new and

extraordinary resolution was whispered about,—that he would be divorced from his queen, and would take Cecilia, who was a great man's daughter, to wife. He ordered accordingly a great feast to be prepared, and intended to hold his wedding with her in Bergen. Now when Bishop Magne heard this, he was very sorry; and one day the bishop goes to the king's hall, and with him a priest called Sigurd, who was afterwards bishop of Bergen. When they came to the king's hall, the bishop sent the king a message that he would like to meet him; and asked the king to come out to him. He did so, and came out with a drawn sword in his hand. He received the bishop kindly and asked him to go in and sit down to table with him.

The bishop replies, "I have other business now. Is it true, sire, what is told me, that thou hast the intention of marrying, and of driving away thy queen, and taking another wife?"

The king said it was true.

Then the bishop changed countenance, and angrily replied, "How can it come into your mind, sire, to do such an act in our bishopric as to betray God's word and law, and the holy church? It surprises me that you treat with such contempt our episcopal office, and your own royal office. I will now do what is my duty; and in the name of God, of the holy King Olaf, of Peter the apostle, and of the other saints, forbid thee this wickedness."

While he thus spoke he stood straight up, as if stretching out his neck to the blow, as if ready if the king chose to let the sword fall; and the priest Sigurd, who afterwards was bishop, has declared that the sky appeared to

him no bigger than a calf's skin, so frightful did the appearance of the king present itself to him. The king returned to the hall, however, without saying a word; and the bishop went to his house and home so cheerful and gay that he laughed, and saluted every child on his way, and was playing with his fingers, Then the priest Sigurd asked him the reason, saying, "Why are you so cheerful, sir? Do you not consider that the king may be exasperated against you? and would it not be better to get out of the way?"

Then said the bishop, "It appears to me more likely that he will not act so; and besides, what death could be better, or more desirable, than to leave life for the honour of God? or to die for the holy cause of Christianity and our own office, by preventing that which is not right? I am so cheerful because I have done what I ought to do."

There was much noise in the town about this. The king got ready for a journey, and took with him corn, malt and honey. He went south to Stavanger, and prepared a feast there for his marriage with Cecilia. When a bishop who ruled there heard of this he went to the king, and asked if it were true that he intended to marry in the lifetime of the queen.

The king said it was so.

The bishop answers, "If it be so, sire, you must know how much such a thing is forbidden to inferior persons. Now it appears as if you thought it was allowable for you, because you have great power, and that it is proper for you, although it is against right and propriety; but I do not know how you will do it in our bishopric, dishonour-

ing thereby God's command, the holy Church, and our episcopal authority. But you must bestow a great amount of gifts and estates on this foundation, and thereby pay the mulct due to God and to us for such transgression."

Then said the king, "Take what thou wilt of our possessions. Thou art far more reasonable than Bishop Magne."

Then the king went away, as well pleased with this bishop as ill pleased with him who had laid a prohibition on him. Thereafter the king married the girl, and loved her tenderly.

41.—IMPROVEMENT OF KONUNGAHELLA.

King Sigurd improved the town of Konungahella so much, that there was not a greater town in Norway at the time, and he remained there long for the defence of the frontiers. He built a king's house in the castle, and imposed a duty on all the districts in the neighbourhood of the town, as well as on the townspeople,—that every person of nine years of age and upwards should bring to the castle five missile stones for weapons, or as many large stakes sharp at one end and five ells long. In the castle the king built a cross-church of timber, and carefully put together, as far as regards the wood and other materials. The cross-church was consecrated in the 24th year of King Sigurd's reign (1127). Here the king deposited the piece of the holy cross, and many other holy relics. It was called the castle church; and before the high altar he placed the tables he had got made in the Greek country, which were of copper and silver, all gilt, and beautifully

adorned with jewels. Here was also the shrine which the Danish king Eirik Eimune had sent to King Sigurd; and the altar book, written with gold letters, which the patriarch had presented to King Sigurd.

42.—KING SIGURD'S DEATH.

Three years after the consecration of the cross-church, when King Sigurd was stopping at Viken, he fell sick (1130). He died the night before Mary's-mass (August 15), and was buried in Halvard's church, where he was laid in the stone wall without the choir on the south side. His son Magnus was in the town at the time and took possession of the whole of the king's treasury when King Sigurd died. Sigurd had been king of Norway twenty-seven years (1104-1130), and was forty years of age when he died. The time of his reign was good for the country; for there was peace, and crops were good.

SAGA OF MAGNUS THE BLIND AND OF HARALD GILLE.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

An age of conflict now begins in Norway. On his death, in 1130, Sigurd left his son Magnus and his brother Harald. They soon divided the government, and then entered upon a five-years' conflict, until Magnus, in 1135, with eyes picked out, went into a convent.

The next year, 1136, a new pretender appeared in the person of Sigurd Slembe, who took King Harald's life in 1137. Magnus died in 1139.

Other literature in regard to this epoch is *Fagrskinna* and *Morkinskinna*. The corresponding part of *Agrip* is lost.

Skalds quoted are: Haldor Skvaldre, Einar Skulason, and Ivar Ingemundson.

1.—MAGNUS AND HARALD PROCLAIMED KINGS.

King Sigurd's son Magnus was proclaimed in Oslo king of all the country immediately after his father's death, according to the oath which the whole nation had sworn to King Sigurd; and many went into his service, and many became his lendermen. Magnus was the handsomest man then in Norway; of a passionate temper, and cruel, but distinguished in bodily exercises. The favour of the people he owed most to the respect for his father. He was a great drinker, greedy of money, hard, and obstinate.

Harald Gille, on the other hand, was very pleasing in intercourse, gay, and full of mirth; and so generous that

he spared in nothing for the sake of his friends. He willingly listened to good advice, so that he allowed others to consult with him and give counsel. With all this he obtained favour and a good repute, and many men attached themselves as much to him as to King Magnus. Harald was in Tunsberg when he heard of his brother King Sigurd's death. He called together his friends to a meeting, and it was resolved to hold the Hauga Thing[1] there in the town. At this Thing, Harald was chosen king of half the country, and it was called a forced oath which had been taken from him to renounce his paternal heritage. Then Harald formed a court, and appointed lendermen; and very soon he had as many people about him as King Magnus. Then men went between them, and matters stood in this way for seven days; but King Magnus, finding he had fewer people, was obliged to give way, and to divide the kingdom with Harald into two parts. The kingdom accordingly was so divided (October 3, 1130) that each of them should have the half part of the kingdom which King Sigurd had possessed; but that King Magnus alone should inherit the fleet of ships, the table service, the valuable articles and the movable effects which had belonged to his father, King Sigurd. He was notwithstanding the least satisfied with his share. Although they were of such different dispositions, they ruled the country for some time in peace. King Harald had a son called Sigurd, by Thora, a daughter of Guthorm Grabarde. King Harald afterwards married Ingerid, a daughter of Ragnvald, who was a son of the Swedish King Inge Steinkelson. King Mag-

[1]Hauga-thing means a Thing held at the tumuli or burial mounds.—L.

nus was married to a daughter of Knut Lavard, and she was a sister of the Danish King Valdemar; but King Magnus having no affection for her, sent her back to Denmark; and from that day everything went ill with him, and he brought upon himself the enmity of her family.

2.—OF THE FORCES OF HARALD AND MAGNUS.

When the two relations, Harald and Magnus, had been about three years kings of Norway (1131-1133), they both passed the fourth winter (1134) in the town of Nidaros, and invited each other as guests; but their people were always ready for a fight. In spring King Magnus sailed southwards along the land with his fleet, and drew all the men he could obtain out of each district, and sounded his friends if they would strengthen him with their power to take the kingly dignity from Harald, and give him such a portion of the kingdom as might be suitable; representing to them that King Harald had already renounced the kingdom by oath. King Magnus obtained the consent of many powerful men. The same spring Harald went to the Uplands, and by the upper roads eastwards to Viken; and when he heard what King Magnus was doing, he also drew together men on his side. Wheresoever the two parties went they killed the cattle, or even the people, upon the farms of the adverse party. King Magnus had by far the most people, for the main strength of the country lay open to him for collecting men from it. King Harald was in Viken on the east side of the fjord, and collected men, while they were doing each other damage in property and life. King Harald had with him

Kristrod, his brother by his mother's side, and many other lendermen; but King Magnus had many more. King Harald was with his forces at a place called Fors in Ranrike, and went from thence towards the sea. The evening before Saint Lawrence day (August 10), they had their supper at a place called Fyrileif, while the guard kept a watch on horseback all around the house. The watchmen observed King Magnus's army hastening towards the house, and consisting of full 6000 men, while King Harald had but 1500. Now come the watchmen who had to bring the news to King Harald of what was going on and say that King Magnus's army was now very near the town.

The king says, "What will my relation King Magnus Sigurdson have? He wants not surely to fight us."

Thjostolf Alason replies, "You must certainly, sire, make preparation for that, both for yourself and your men. King Magnus has been drawing together an army all the summer for the purpose of giving you battle when he meets you."

Then King Harald stood up, and ordered his men to take their arms. "We shall fight, if our relative King Magnus wants to fight us."

Then the war-horns sounded, and all Harald's men went out from the house to an enclosed field, and set up their banners. King Harald had on two shirts of ring-mail, but his brother Kristrod had no armour on; and a gallant man he was. When King Magnus and his men saw King Harald's troop they drew up and made their array, and made their line so long that they could surround the whole of King Harald's troop. So says Haldor Skvaldre:—

"King Magnus on the battle-plain
From his long troop-line had great gain;
The plain was drenched with warm blood,
Which lay a red and reeking flood."

3.—BATTLE AT FYRILEIF.

King Magnus had the holy cross carried before him in this battle, and the battle was great and severe. The king's brother, Kristrod, had penetrated with his troop into the middle of King Magnus's array, and cut down on each side of him, so that people gave way before him everywhere. But a powerful bonde who was in King Harald's array raised his spear with both hands, and drove it through between Kristrod's shoulders, so that it came out at his breast; and thus fell Kristrod. Many who were near asked the bonde why he had done so foul a deed.

The bonde replies, "He knows the consequences now of slaughtering my cattle in summer, and taking all that was in my house, and forcing me to follow him here. I determined to give him some return when the opportunity came."

After this King Harald's army took to flight, and he fled himself, with all his men. Many fell; and Ingemar Sveinson of Ask, a great chief and lenderman, got there his death-wound, and nearly sixty of King Harald's court-men also fell. Harald himself fled eastward to Viken to his ships, and went out of the country to King Eirik Eimune in Denmark, and found him in Seeland and sought aid from him. King Eirik received him well, and principally because they had sworn to each other to be as brothers;[1] and gave him Halland as a fief to rule over, and

[1]These brotherhoods, by which one man was bound by oath to aid or avenge another, were common in the Middle Ages among all ranks. "Sworn brothers" is still a common expression with us.—L.

gave him seven long-ships, but without equipment. Thereafter King Harald went northwards through Halland, and many Northmen came to meet him. After this battle King Magnus subdued the whole country, giving life and safety to all who were wounded, and had them taken care of equally with his own men. He then called the whole country his own, and had a choice of the best men who were in the country. When they held a council among themselves afterwards, Sigurd Sigurdson, Thorer Ingeridson, and all the men of most understanding, advised that they should keep their forces together in Viken, and remain there, in case Harald should return from the south; but King Magnus would take his own way, and went north to Bergen. There he sat all winter (1135), and allowed his men to leave him; on which the lendermen returned home to their own houses.

4.—DEATH OF ASBJORN AND OF NEREID.

King Harald came to Konungahella with the men who had followed him from Denmark. The lendermen and town's burgesses collected a force against him, which they drew up in a thick array above the town. King Harald landed from his ships, and sent a message to the bondes, desiring that they would not deny him his land, as he wanted no more than what of right belonged to him. Then mediators went between them; and it came to this, that the bondes dismissed their troops, and submitted to him. Thereupon he bestowed fiefs and property on the lendermen, that they might stand by him, and paid the bondes who joined him the lawful mulcts for what they

had lost. A great body of men attached themselves, therefore, to King Harald; and he proceeded westwards to Viken, where he gave peace to all men, except to King Magnus's people, whom he plundered and killed wherever he found them. And when he came west to Sarpsborg he took prisoners two of King Magnus's lendermen, Asbjorn and his brother Nereid; and gave them the choice that one should be hanged, and the other thrown into the Sarpsborg waterfall, and they might choose as they pleased. Asbjorn chose to be thrown into the cataract, for he was the elder of the two, and this death appeared the most dreadful; and so it was done. Haldor Skvaldre tells of this:—

"Asbjorn, who opposed the king,
O'er the wild cataract they fling:
Nereid, who opposed the king,
Must on Hagbard's high tree swing.
The king gives food in many a way
To foul-mouthed beasts and birds of prey:
The generous men who dare oppose
Are treated as the worst of foes."

Thereafter King Harald proceeded north to Tunsberg, where he was well received, and a large force gathered to him.

5.—OF THE COUNSELS PROPOSED.

When King Magnus, who was in Bergen, heard these tidings, he called together all the chiefs who were in the town, and asked them their counsel, and what they should now do. Then Sigurd Sigurdson said, "Here I can give a good advice. Let a ship be manned with good men, and put me, or any other lenderman, to command it; send it to thy relation, King Harald, and offer him peace according to the conditions upright men may determine upon, and offer him the half of the kingdom. It appears to me probable that King Harald, by the words and counsel of

good men, may accept this offer, and thus there may be a peace established between you."

Then King Magnus replied, "This proposal I will not accept of; for of what advantage would it be, after we have gained the whole kingdom in summer to give away the half of it now? Give us some other counsel."

Then Sigurd Sigurdson answered, "It appears to me, sire, that your lendermen who in autumn asked your leave to return home will now sit at home and will not come to you. At that time it was much against my advice that you dispersed so entirely the people we had collected; for I could well suppose that Harald would come back to Viken as soon as he heard that it was without a chief. Now there is still another counsel, and it is but a poor one; but it may turn out useful to us. Send out your pursuivants, and send other people with them, and let them go against the lendermen who will not join you in your necessity, and kill them; and bestow their property on others who will give you help although they may have been of small importance before. Let them drive together the people, the bad as well as the good; and go with the men you can thus assemble against King Harald, and give him battle."

The king replies, "It would be unpopular to put to death people of distinction, and raise up inferior people who often break faith and law, and the country would be still worse off. I would like to hear some other counsel still."

Sigurd replies, "It is difficult for me now to give advice, as you will neither make peace nor give battle. Let

us go north to Throndhjem, where the main strength of the country is most inclined to our side; and on the way let us gather all the men we can. It may be that these Elfgrims will be tired of such a long stride after us."

The king replies, "We must not fly from those whom we beat in summer. Give some better counsel still."

Then Sigurd stood up and said, while he was preparing to go out, "I will now give you the counsel which I see you will take, and which must have its course. Sit here in Bergen until Harald comes with his troops, and then you will either suffer death or disgrace."

And Sigurd remained no longer at that meeting.

6.—OF HARALD'S FORCE.

King Harald came from the East along the coast with a great army, and this winter (1135) is called on that account the Crowd-winter. King Harald came to Bergen on Christmas eve, and landed with his fleet at Floruvagar; but would not fight on account of the sacred time. But King Magnus prepared for defence in the town. He erected a stone-slinging machine out on the holm, and had iron chains and wooden booms laid across over the passage from the king's house to Nordnes, and to the Monks' bridge. He had foot-traps made, and thrown into Saint John's field, and did not suspend these works except during the three sacred days of Christmas. The last holyday of Yule, King Harald ordered his war-horns to sound the gathering of his men for going to the town; and, during the Yule holydays, his army had been increased by about 900 men.

7.—KING MAGNUS TAKEN PRISONER.

King Harald made a promise to King Olaf the Saint for victory, that he would build an Olaf's church in the town at his own expense. King Magnus drew up his men in the Christ church yard; but King Harald laid his vessels first at Nordnes. Now when King Magnus and his people saw that, they turned round towards the town, and to the end of the shore; but as they passed through the streets many of the burgesses ran into their houses and homes, and those who went across the fields fell into the foot-traps. Then King Magnus and his men perceived that King Harald had rowed with all his men across to Hegravik, and landed there, and had gone from thence the upper road up the hill opposite the town. Now Magnus returned back again through the streets, and then his men fled from him in all directions; some up to the mountains, some up to the neighbourhood of the convent of nuns, some to churches, or hid themselves as they best could. King Magnus fled to his ship; but there was no possibility of getting away, for the iron chains outside prevented the passage of vessels. He had also but few men with him, and therefore could do nothing. Einar Skulason tells of this in the song of Harald:—

"For a whole week an iron chain
Cut off all sailing to the main:
Bergen's blue stable was locked fast,—
Her floating wains could not get past."

Soon after Harald's people came out to the ships, and then King Magnus was made prisoner. He was sitting behind in the forecastle upon the chests of the high-seat, and at his side Hakon Fauk, his mother's brother, who

was very popular but was not considered very wise, and Ivar Assurson. They, and many others of King Magnus's friends, were taken, and some of them killed on the spot.

8.—KING MAGNUS MUTILATED.

Thereafter King Harald had a meeting of his counsellors, and desired their counsel; and in this meeting the judgment was given that Magnus should be deposed from his dominions, and should no longer be called king. Then he was delivered to the king's slaves, who mutilated him, picked out both his eyes, cut off one foot, and at last castrated him. Ivar Assurson was blinded, and Hakon Fauk killed. The whole country then was reduced to obedience under King Harald. Afterwards it was diligently examined who were King Magnus's best friends, or who knew most of his concealments of treasure or valuables. The holy cross King Magnus had kept beside him since the battle of Fyrileif, but would not tell where it was deposited for preservation. Bishop Reinald of Stavanger, who was an Englishman, was considered very greedy of money. He was a great friend of King Magnus, and it was thought likely that great treasure and valuables had been given into his keeping. Men were sent for him accordingly, and he came to Bergen, where it was insisted against him that he had some knowledge of such treasure; but he denied it altogether, would not admit it, and offered to clear himself by ordeal. King Harald would not have this, but laid on the bishop a money fine of fifteen marks of gold, which he should pay to the king. The bishop declared he would not thus im-

poverish his bishop's see, but would rather offer his life. On this they hanged the bishop out on the holm, beside the sling machine. As he was going to the gallows he threw the sock from his foot, and said with an oath, "I know no more about King Magnus's treasure than what is in this sock;" and in it there was a gold ring. Bishop Reinald was buried at Nordnes in Michael's church, and this deed was much blamed. After this Harald Gille was sole king of Norway as long as he lived.

9.—WONDERFUL OMENS IN KONUNGAHELLA.

Five years after King Sigurd's death remarkable occurrences took place in Konungahella (1135). Guthorm, a son of Harald Fletter, and Sæmund Husfreyja, were at that time the king's officers there. Sæmund was married to Ingebjorg, a daughter of the priest Andres Brunson. Their sons were Paul Flip and Gunne Fis. Sæmund's natural son was called Asmund. Andres Brunson was a very remarkable man, who carried on divine service in the Cross church. His wife[1] was called Solveig. Jon Loptson, who was then eleven years old, was in their house to be fostered and educated. The priest Lopt Sæmundson, Jon's father, was also in the town at that time. The priest Andres and Solveig had a daughter by name Helga, who was Einar's wife. It happened now in Konungahella, the next Sunday night after Easter week, that there was a great noise in the streets through the whole town as if the king was going through with all his court-men. The dogs were so

[1]The Catholic priests appear to have had wives at that time in Norway, and celibacy to have been confined to the monks.—L.

affected that nobody could hold them, but they slipped loose; and when they came out they ran mad, biting all that came in their way, people and cattle. All who were bitten by them till the blood came turned raging mad; and pregnant women were taken in labour prematurely, and became mad. From Easter to Ascension-day, these portentous circumstances took place almost every night. People were dreadfully alarmed at these wonders; and many made themselves ready to remove, sold their houses, and went out to the country districts, or to other towns. The most intelligent men looked upon it as something extremely remarkable; were in dread of it; and said, as it proved to be, that it was an omen of important events which had not yet taken place. And the priest Andres, on Whit Sunday, made a long and excellent speech, and turned the conclusion of it to the distressing situation of the townspeople; telling them to muster courage, and not lay waste their excellent town by deserting it, but rather to take the utmost care in all things, and use the greatest foresight against all dangers, as of fire or the enemy, and to pray to God to have mercy on them.

10.—THE RISE OF WAR IN KONUNGAHELLA.

Thirteen loaded merchant ships made ready to leave the town, intending to proceed to Bergen; but eleven of them were lost, men and goods, and all that was in them; the twelfth was lost also, but the people were saved, although the cargo went to the bottom. At that time the priest Lopt went north to Bergen, with all that belonged to him, and arrived safely. The merchant vessels were

lost on Saint Lawrence eve (August 10). The Danish king Eirik and the Archbishop Assur, both sent notice to Konungahella to keep watch on their town; and said the Vindland people had a great force on foot with which they made war far around on Christian people, and usually gained the victory. But the townspeople attended very little to this warning, were indifferent, and forgot more and more the dreadful omens the longer it was since they happened. On the holy Saint Lawrence day, while the words of high mass were spoken, came to the Vindland king Rettibur to Konungahella with 550 Vindland cutters, and in each cutter were forty-four men and two horses. The king's sister's son Dunimiz, and Unibur, a chief who ruled over many people, were with him. These two chiefs rowed at once, with a part of their troops, up the east arm of the Gaut river past Hising Isle, and thus came down to the town; but a part of the fleet lay in the western arm, and came so to the town. They made fast their ships at the piles, and landed their horses, and rode over the height of Bratsas, and from thence up around the town. Einar, a relation of priest Andres, brought these tidings up to the Castle church; for there the whole inhabitants of the town were gathered to hear high mass. Einar came just as the priest Andres was holding his discourse; and he told the people that an army was sailing up against the town with a great number of ships of war, and that some people were riding over Bratsas. Many said it must be the Danish king Eirik, and from him they might expect peace. The people ran down into the town to their properties, armed

themselves, and went down upon the piers, whence they immediately saw there was an enemy and an immense army. Nine East-country trading vessels belonging to the merchants were afloat in the river at the piers. The Vindland people first directed their course toward these and fought with the merchants, who armed themselves, and defended themselves long, well, and manfully. There was a hard battle, and resistance, before the merchant vessels were cleared of their men; and in this conflict the Vindland people lost 150 of their ships, with all the men on board. When the battle was sharpest the townsmen stood upon the piers, and shot at the heathens. But when the fight slackened the burgesses fled up to the town, and from thence into the castle; and the men took with them all their valuable articles, and such goods as they could carry. Solveig and her daughters, with two other women, went on shore, when the Vindlanders took possession of the merchant vessels. Now the Vindlanders landed, and mustered their men, and discovered their loss. Some of them went up into the town, some on board the merchant ships, and took all the goods they pleased; and then they set fire to the town, and burnt it and the ships. They hastened then with all their army to assault the castle.

11.—THE SECOND BATTLE.

King Rettibur made an offer to those who were in the castle that they should go out, and he would give them their lives, weapons, clothes, silver, and gold; but all exclaimed against it, and went out on the fortification: some shot, some threw stones, some sharp stakes. It

was a great battle, in which many fell on both sides, but by far the most of the Vindlanders. Solveig came up to a large farm called Solbjorg, and brought the news. A message war-token was there split, and sent out to Skurbagar, where there happened to be a joint ale-drinking feast, and many men were assembled. A bonde called Olver Miklimun (Mickle Mouth) was there, who immediately sprang up, took helmet and shield, and a great axe in his hand, and said, "Stand up, brave lads, and take your weapons. Let us go help the townspeople; for it would appear shameful to every man who heard of it, if we sit here sipping our ale, while good men in the town are losing their lives by our neglect."

Many made an objection, and said they would only be losing their own lives, without being of any assistance to the townspeople.

Then said Olver, "Although all of you should hold back, I will go alone; and one or two heathens, at any rate, shall fall before I fall."

He ran down to the town, and a few men after him to see what he would do, and also whether they could assist him in any way. When he came near the castle, and the heathens saw him, they sent out eight men fully armed against him; and when they met, the heathen men ran and surrounded him on all sides. Olver lifted his axe, and struck behind him with the extreme point of it, hitting the neck of the man who was coming up behind him, so that his throat and jawbone were cut through, and he fell dead backwards. Then he heaved his axe forwards, and struck the next man in the head, and clove him

down to the shoulders. He then fought with the others, and killed two of them; but was much wounded himself. The four who remained took to flight, but Olver ran after them. There was a ditch before them, and two of the heathens jumped into it, and Olver killed them both; but he stuck fast himself in the ditch, so that two of the eight heathens escaped. The men who had followed Olver took him up, and brought him back to Skurbagar, where his wounds were bound and healed; and it was the talk of the people, that no single man had ever made such a bloody onset. Two lendermen, Sigurd Gyrdson, a brother of Philip, and Sigard, came with 600 men to Skurbagar; on which Sigurd turned back with 400 men. He was but little respected afterwards, and soon died. Sigard, on the other hand, proceeded with 200 men towards the town; and they gave battle to the heathens, and were all slain. While the Vindlanders were storming the castle, their king and his chiefs were out of the battle. At one place there was a man among the Vindlanders shooting with a bow, and killing a man for every arrow; and two men stood before him, and covered him with their shields. Then Sæmund Husfreyja said to his son Asmund, that they should both shoot together at this bowman. "But I will shoot at the man who holds the shield before him." He did so, and he knocked the shield down a little before the man; and in the same instant Asmund shot between the shields, and the arrow hit the bowman in the forehead, so that it came out at his neck, and he fell down dead. When the Vindlanders saw it they howled like dogs, or like wolves. Then King Ret-

tibur called to them that he would give them safety and life, but they refused terms. The heathens again made a hard assault. One of the heathens in particular fought so bravely, and ventured so near, that he came quite up to the castle-gate, and pierced the man who stood outside the gate with his sword; and although they used both arrows and stones against him, and he had neither shield nor helmet, nothing could touch him, for he was so skilled in witchcraft that weapon could not wound him. Then priest Andres took consecrated fire; blew upon it; cut tinder in pieces, and laid it on the fire; and then laid the tinder on the arrow-point, and gave it to Asmund. He shot this arrow at the warlock; and the shaft hit so well that it did its business, and the man of witchcraft fell dead. Then the heathens crowded together as before, howling and whining dreadfully; and all gathered about their king, on which the Christians believed that they were holding a council about retreating. The interpreters, who understood the Vindland tongue, heard the chief Unibur make the following speech: "These people are brave, and it is difficult to make anything of them; and even if we took all the goods in their town, we might willingly give as much more that we had never come here, so great has been our loss of men and chiefs. Early in the day, when we began to assault the castle, they defended themselves first with arrows and spears; then they fought against us with stones; and now with sticks and staves, as against dogs. I see from this that they are in want of weapons and means of defense; so we shall make one more hard assault, and try their

strength." It was as he said, that they now fought with stakes; because, in the first assault, they had imprudently used up all their missile weapons and stones; and now when the Christians saw the number of their stakes diminishing, they clave each stake in two. The heathens now made a very hot attack, and rested themselves between whiles, and on both sides they were exhausted. During a rest the Vindland king Rettibur again offered terms, and that they should retain the weapons, clothes, and silver they could carry out of the castle. Sæmund Husfreyja had fallen, and the men who remained gave the counsel to deliver up the castle and themselves into the power of the heathens; but it was a foolish counsel; for the heathens did not keep their promises, but took all people, men, women, and children, and killed all of them who were wounded or young, or could not easily be carried with them. They took all the goods that were in the castle; went into the Cross church, and plundered it of all its ornaments. The priest Andres gave King Rettibur a silver-mounted gilt sceptre, and to his sister's son Dunimiz he gave a gold ring. They supposed from this that he was a man of great importance in the town, and held him in higher respect than the others. They took away with them the holy cross, and also the tables which stood before the altar, which Sigurd had got made in the Greek country, and had brought home himself. These they took, and laid flat down on the steps before the altar. Then the heathens went out of the church. Rettibur said, "This house has been adorned with great zeal for the God to whom it is dedicated; but, methinks,

He has shown little regard for the town or house: so I see their God has been angry at those who defended them." King Rettibur gave the priest Andres the church, the shrine, the holy cross, the Bible, the altar-book, and four clerks (prisoners); but the heathens burnt the Castle church, and all the houses that were in the castle. As the fire they had set to the church went out twice, they hewed the church down, and then it burnt like other houses. Then the heathens went to their ships with the booty; but when they mustered their people and saw their loss, they made prisoners of all the people, and divided them among the vessels. Now priest Andres went on board the king's ship with the holy cross, and there came a great terror over the heathens on account of the portentous circumstance which took place in the king's ship; namely, it became so hot that all thought they were going to be burnt up. The king ordered the interpreter to ask the priest why this happened. He replied, that the Almighty God on whom the Christians believed, sent them a proof of His anger, that they who would not believe in their Creator presumed to lay hands on the emblem of His suffering; and that there lay so much power in the cross, that such, and even clearer miracles, happened to heathen men who had taken the cross in their hands. The king had the priest put into the ship's boat, and the priest Andres carried the holy cross in his grasp. They led the boat along past the ship's bow, and then along the side of the next ship, and then shoved it with a boat-hook in beside the pier. Then Andres went with the cross by night to Solbjorg,

in rain and dreadful weather; but brought it in good preservation. King Rettibur, and the men he had remaining, went home to Vindland, and many of the people who were taken at Konungahella were long afterwards in slavery in Vindland; and those who were ransomed and came back to Norway to their udal lands and properties, throve worse than before their capture. The merchant town of Konungahella has never since risen to the importance it was of before this event.

12.—OF MAGNUS THE BLIND.

King Magnus, after he was deprived of sight, went north to Nidaros, where he went into the cloister on the holm, and assumed the monk's dress. The cloister received the farm of Great Hernes in Frosta for his support. King Harald alone ruled the country the following winter, gave all men peace and pardon who desired it, and took many of the men into his court-service who had been with King Magnus. Einar Skulason says that King Harald had two battles in Denmark; the one at Hvedn Isle, and the other at Hlesey Isle:—

"Unwearied champion! who wast bred
To stain thy blue-edged weapons red!
Beneath high Hvedn's rocky shore,
The faithless felt thy steel once more."

And again, thus:—

"On Hlesey's plain the foe must quail
'Fore him who dyes their shirts of mail.
His storm-stretched banner o'er his head
Flies straight, and fills the foe with dread."

13.—OF KING HARALD GILLE AND BISHOP MAGNUS.

King Harald Gille was a very generous man. It is

told that in his time Magnus Einarson came from Iceland to be consecrated a bishop, and the king received him well, and showed him much respect. When the bishop was ready to sail for Iceland again, and the ship was rigged out for sea, he went to the hall where the king was drinking, saluted him politely and warmly, and the king received him joyfully. The queen was sitting beside the king.

Then said the king, "Are you ready, bishop, for your voyage?"

He replied that he was.

The king said, "You come to us just now at a bad time; for the tables are just removed, and there is nothing at hand suitable to present to you. What is there to give the bishop?"

The treasurer replies, "Sire, as far as I know, all articles of any value are given away."

The king: "Here is a drinking goblet remaining; take this, bishop; it is not without value."

The bishop expressed his thanks for the honour shown him.

Then said the queen, "Farewell, bishop! and a happy voyage."

The king said to her, "When did you ever hear a noble lady say so to a bishop without giving him something?"

She replies, "Sire, what have I to give him?"

The king: "Thou hast the cushion under thee."

Thereupon this, which was covered with costly cloth, and was a valuable article, was given to the bishop. When the bishop was going away the king took the cushion

from under himself and gave it him, saying, "They have long been together." When the bishop arrived in Iceland to his bishop's see, it was talked over what should be done with the goblet that would be serviceable for the king; and when the bishop asked the opinion of other people, many thought it should be sold, and the value bestowed on the poor. Then said the bishop, "I will take another plan. I will have a chalice made of it for this church, and consecrate it, so that all the saints of whom there are relics in this church shall let the king have some good for his gift every time a mass is sung over it." This chalice has since belonged to the bishopric of Skalholt; and of the costly cloth with which the cushions given him by the king were covered, were made the choristers' cloaks which are now in Skalholt. From this the generous spirit of King Harald may be seen, as well as from many other things, of which but a few are set down here.

14.—BEGINNING OF SIGURD SLEMBIDJAKN.

There was a man, by name Sigurd, who was brought up in Norway, and was called priest Adalbrikt's son. Sigurd's mother was Thora, a daughter of Saxe of Vik, a sister of Sigrid, who was mother of King Olaf Magnuson, and of Kare, the king's brother who married Borghild, a daughter of Dag Eilifson. Their sons were Sigurd of Austrat and Dag. Sigurd of Austrat's sons were Jon of Austrat, Thorstein, and Andres the Deaf. Jon was married to Sigrid, a sister of King Inge and of Duke Skule. This Sigurd, in his childhood, was kept

at his book, became a clerk, and was consecrated a deacon; but as he ripened in years and strength he became a very clever man, stout, strong, distinguished for all perfections and exercises beyond any of his years,—indeed, beyond any man in Norway. Sigurd showed early traces of a haughty ungovernable spirit, and was therefore called Slembidjakn. He was as handsome a man as could be seen, with rather thin but beautiful hair. When it came to Sigurd's ears that his mother said King Magnus was his father, he laid aside all clerkship; and as soon as he was old enough to be his own master, he left the country. He was a long time on his travels, went to Palestine; was at the Jordan river; and visited many holy places, as pilgrims usually do. When he came back, he applied himself to trading expeditions. One winter he was in Orkney with Earl Harald, and was with him when Thorkel Fostre Summarlidason was killed. Sigurd was also in Scotland with the Scottish king David, and was held in great esteem by him. Thereafter Sigurd went to Denmark; and according to the account of himself and his men, he there submitted to the iron ordeal to confirm his paternal descent, and proved by it, in the presence of five bishops, that he was a son of King Magnus Barefoot. So says Ivar Ingemundson, in Sigurd's song:—

"The holiest five
Of men alive,—
Bishops were they,—
Solemnly say,
The iron glowing
Red hot, yet showing
No scaith on skin,
Proves cause and kin."

King Harald Gille's friends, however, said this was only a lie, and deceit of the Danes.

15.—SIGURD IN ICELAND.

It is told before of Sigurd that he passed some years in merchant voyages, and he came thus to Iceland one winter, and took up his lodging with Thorgils Odson in Saurby; but very few knew where he was. In autumn, when the sheep were being driven into a fold to be slaughtered, a sheep that was to be caught ran to Sigurd; and as Sigurd thought the sheep ran to him for protection, he stretched out his hands to it and lifted it over the fold dyke, and let it run to the hills, saying, "There are not many who seek help from me, so I may well help this one." It happened the same winter that a woman had committed a theft, and Thorgils, who was angry at her for it, was going to punish her; but she ran to Sigurd to ask his help, and he set her upon the bench by his side. Thorgils told him to give her up, and told him what she had committed; but Sigurd begged forgiveness for her since she had come to him for protection, and that Thorgils would dismiss the complaint against her, but Thorgils insisted that she should receive her punishment. When Sigurd saw that Thorgils would not listen to his entreaty, he started up, drew his sword, and bade him take her if he dared; and Thorgils seeing that Sigurd would defend the woman by force of arms, and observing his commanding mien, guessed who he must be, desisted from pursuing the woman, and pardoned her. There were many foreign men there, and Sigurd made the least appearance among them. One day Sigurd came into the sitting-room, and a Northman who was splendidly clothed was playing chess with one of Thorgils's

house-servants. The Northman called Sigurd, and asked him his advice how to play; but when Sigurd looked at the board, he saw the game was lost. The man who was playing against the Northman had a sore foot, so that one toe was bruised, and matter was coming out of it. Sigurd, who was sitting on the bench, takes a straw, and draws it along the floor, so that some young kittens ran after it. He drew the straw always before them, until they came near the house-servant's foot, who jumping up with a scream, threw the chessmen in disorder on the board; and thus it was a dispute how the game had stood. This is given as a proof of Sigurd's cunning. People did not know that he was a learned clerk until the Saturday before Easter, when he consecrated the holy water with chant; and the longer he stayed there the more he was esteemed. The summer after, Sigurd told Thorgils before they parted, that he might with all confidence address his friends to Sigurd Slembidjakn. Thorgils asked how nearly he was related to him, on which he replies, "I am Sigurd Slembidjakn, a son of King Magnus Barefoot." He then left Iceland.

16.—OF SIGURD SLEMBE.

When Harald Gille had been six years (1136), king of Norway, Sigurd came to the country, and went to his brother King Harald, and found him in Bergen. He placed himself entirely in the king's hands, disclosed who his father was, and asked him to acknowledge their relationship. The king gave him no hasty or distinct reply; but laid the matter before his friends in a confer-

ence at a specially appointed meeting. After this conference it became known that the king laid an accusation against Sigurd, because he had been at the killing of Thorkel Fostre in the West. Thorkel had accompanied Harald to Norway when he first came to the country, and had been one of Harald's best friends. This case was followed up so severely, that a capital accusation against Sigurd was made, and, by the advice of the lendermen, was carried so far, that some of the king's pursuivants went one evening late to Sigurd, and called him to them. They then took a boat and rowed away with Sigurd from the town south to Nordnes. Sigurd sat on a chest in the stern of the boat, and had his suspicions that foul play was intended. He was clothed in blue trousers, and over his shirt he had a hood tied with ribands, which served him for a cloak. He sat looking down, and holding his hood-strings; and sometimes moved them over his head, sometimes let them fall again before him. Now when they had passed the ness, they were drunk, and merry, were rowing so eagerly that they were not taking notice of anything. Sigurd stood up, and went on the boat's deck; but the two men who were placed to guard him stood up also, and followed him to the side of the vessel, holding by his cloak, as is the custom in guarding people of distinction. As he was afraid that they would catch hold of more of his clothes, he seized them both, and leaped overboard with them. The boat, in the meantime, had gone on a long way, and it was a long time before those on board could turn the vessel, and long before they could get their own men taken on board again; and

Sigurd dived under water, and swam so far away that he reached the land before they could get the boat turned to pursue him. Sigurd, who was very swift of foot, hied up to the mountains, and the king's men travelled about the whole night seeking him without finding him. He lay down in a cleft of the rocks; and as he was very cold he took off his trousers, cut a hole in the seat of them, and stuck his head through it, and put his arms in the legs of them. He escaped with life this time; and the king's men returned, and could not conceal their unsuccessful adventure.

17.—TREACHERY TOWARDS KING HARALD.

Sigurd thought now that it would be of no use to seek any help from King Harald again; and he kept himself concealed all the autumn and the beginning of the winter. He lay hid in Bergen, in the house of a priest. King Harald was also in the town, and many great people with him. Now Sigurd considered how, with his friends' help, he might take the king by surprise, and make an end of him. Many men took part in this design; and among them some who were King Harald's court-men and chamberlains, but who had formerly been King Magnus's court-men. They stood in great favour with the king, and some of them sat constantly at the king's table. On Saint Lucia's day (December 13), in the evening when they proposed to execute this treason, two men sat at the king's table talking together; and one of them said to the king, "Sire, we two table-companions submit our dispute to your judgment, having made a wager of a

basket of honey to him who guesses right. I say that you will sleep this night with your Queen Ingerid; and he says that you will sleep with Thora, Guthorm's daughter."

The king answered laughing, and without suspecting in the least that there lay treachery under the question,—that he who had asked had lost his bet.

They knew thus where he was to be found that night; but the main guard was without the house in which most people thought the king would sleep, viz., that which the queen was in.

18.—MURDER OF KING HARALD.

Sigurd Slembe, and some men who were in his design, came in the night to the lodging in which King Harald was sleeping; killed the watchman first; then broke open the door, and went in with drawn swords. Ivar Kolbeinson made the first attack on King Harald; and as the king had been drunk when he went to bed he slept sound, and awoke only when the men were striking at him. Then he said in his sleep, "Thou art treating me hardly, Thora." She sprang up, saying, "They are treating thee hardly who love thee less than I do." Harald was deprived of life. Then Sigurd went out with his helpers, and ordered the men to be called to him who had promised him their support if he should get King Harald taken out of the way. Sigurd and his men then went on, and took a boat, set themselves to the oars, and rowed out in front of the king's house; and then it was just beginning to be daylight. Then Sigurd stood up,

spoke to those who were standing on the king's pier, made known to them the murder of King Harald by his hand, and desired that they would take him, and choose him as chief according to his birth. Now came many swarming down to the pier from the king's house; and all with one voice replied, that they would never give obedience or service to a man who had murdered his own brother. "And if thou are not his brother, thou hast no claim from descent to be king." They clashed their weapons together, and adjudged all murderers to be banished and outlawed men. Now the king's horn sounded, and all lendermen and courtmen were called together. Sigurd and his companions saw it was best for them to get way; and he went northward to North Hordaland, where he held a Thing with the bondes, who submitted to him, and gave him the title of king. From thence he went to Sogn, and held a Thing there with the bondes and was proclaimed king. Then he went north across the fjords, and most people supported his cause. So says Ivar Ingemundson:—

"On Harald's fall
The bondes all,
In Hord and Sogn,
Took Magnus' son.

The Things swore too
They would be true
To this new head,
In Harald's stead."

King Harald was buried in the old Christ church.

SAGA OF SIGURD, INGE, AND EYSTEIN, THE SONS OF HARALD.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

Sigurd died 1155, Eystein 1157, and Inge 1161.

Other literature is *Morkinskinna* and *Fagrskinna*.

Sigurd Slembe is the subject of a drama by Björnstjerne Björnson, translated into English by William Morton Payne, and published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, 1888.

Skalds quoted are: Kolle, Einar Skulason, and Thorbjorn Skakkaskald.

1.—HISTORY OF KINGS SIGURD AND INGE.

Queen Ingerid, and with her the lendermen and the court which had been with King Harald, resolved to send a fast-sailing vessel to Throndhjem to make known King Harald's death, and also to desire the Throndhjem people to take King Harald's son Sigurd for king. He was then in the north, and was fostered by Sadagyrd Bardson. Queen Ingerid herself proceeded eastward immediately to Viken. Inge was the name of her son by King Harald, and he was then fostered by Amunde Gyrdson, a grandson of Logberse. When they came to Viken a Borgar-thing was immediately called together, at which Inge, who was in the second year of his age, was chosen king. This resolution was supported by Amunde and Thjostolf Alason, together with many other great chiefs. Now when the tidings came north to Throndhjem that King Harald was murdered, the Throndhjem

people took Sigurd, King Harald's son, to be the king; and this resolution was supported by Ottar Birting, Peter Saudaulfson, the brothers Guthorm of Reine, and Ottar Balle, sons of Asolf and many other great chiefs. Afterwards the whole nation almost submitted to the brothers, and principally because their father was considered holy; and the country took the oath to them, that the kingly power should not go to any other man as long as any of King Harald's sons were alive.

2.—OF SIGURD SLEMBIDJAKN.

Sigurd Slembe sailed north around Stad; and when he came to North More, he found that letters and full powers had arrived before him from the leaders who had given in their allegiance to Harald's sons; so that there he got no welcome or help. As Sigurd himself had but few people with him, he resolved to go with them to Throndhjem, and seek out Magnus the Blind; for he had already sent a message before him to Magnus's friends. Now when they came to the town, they rowed up the river Nid to meet King Magnus, and fastened their land-ropes on the shore at the king's house; but were obliged to set off immediately, for all the people rose against them. They then landed at Monkholm, and took Magnus the Blind out of the cloister against the will of the monks; for he had been consecrated a monk. It is said by some that Magnus willingly went with them; although it was differently reported, in order to make his cause appear better. Sigurd, immediately after Yule (January, 1137), went forth with his suite, expecting

aid from his relations and Magnus's friends, and which they also got. Sigurd sailed with his men out of the fjord, and was joined afterwards by Bjorn Egilson, Gunnar of Gimsar, Haldor Sigurdson, Aslak Hakonson, the brothers Bendikt and Eirik, and also the court which had before been with King Magnus, and many others. With this troop they went south to More, and down to the mouth of Raumsdal fjord. Here Sigurd and Magnus divided their forces, and Sigurd went immediately westwards across the sea. King Magnus again proceeded to the Uplands, where he expected much help and strength, and which he obtained. He remained there the winter and all the summer (1137), and had many people with him; but King Inge proceeded against him with all his forces, and they met at a place called Mynne. There was a great battle, at which King Magnus had the most people. It is related that Thjostolf Alason carried King Inge in his belt as long as the battle lasted, and stood under the banner; but Thjostolf was hard pressed by fatigue and fighting; and it is commonly said that King Inge got his ill health there, and which he retained as long as he lived, so that his back was knotted into a hump, and the one foot was shorter than the other; and he was besides so infirm that he could scarcely walk as long as he lived. The defeat began to turn upon Magnus and his men; and in the front rank of his array fell Haldor Sigurdson, Bjorn Egilson, Gunnar of Gimsar, and a great number of his men, before he himself would take to his horse and fly. So says Kolle:—

"Thy arrow-storm on Mynne's banks
Fast thinn'd the foemen's strongest ranks;
Thy good sword hewed the raven's feast
On Mynne's banks up in the East.
Shield clashed on shield, and bucklers broke
Under thy battle-axe's stroke;
While thou, uncovered, urged the fray,
Thy shield and mail-coat thrown away."

And also this:—

"The king to heaven belonging fled,
When thou, in war's quick death-game bred,
Unpanzered, shieldless on the plain
His heavy steel-clad guards hadst slain.
The painted shield, and steel-plate mail,
Before thy fierce attack soon fail.
To Magnus who belongs to heaven,
Was no such fame in battle given."

Magnus fled eastward to Gautland, and then to Denmark. At that time there was in Gautland an earl, Karl Sonason, who was a great and ambitious man. Magnus the Blind and his men said, wherever they happened to meet with chiefs, that Norway lay quite open to any great chieftain who would attack it; for it might well be said there was no king in the country, and the kingdom was only ruled by lendermen, and, among those who had most sway, there was, from mutual jealousy, most discord. Now Karl, being ambitious of power, listens willingly to such speeches; collects men, and rides west to Viken, where many people, out of fear, submit to him. When Thjostolf Alason and Amunde heard of this, they went with the men they could get together, and took King Inge with them. They met Earl Karl and the Gautland army eastward in Krokaskog, where there was a great battle and a great defeat, King Inge gaining the victory. Munan Ogmundson, Earl Karl's mother's brother, fell there. Ogmund, the father of Munan, was a son of Earl Orm Eilifson, and Sigrid, a daughter of Earl Fin Arnason. Astrid, Ogmund's daughter, was the mother of Earl Karl. Many others of the Gautland people fell at Krokaskog;

and the earl fled eastward through the forest. King Inge pursued them all the way out of the kingdom; and this expedition turned out a great disgrace to them. So says Kolle:—

"I must proclaim how our great lord
Coloured deep red his ice-cold sword:
And ravens played with Gautland bones,
And wolves heard Gautlanders' last groans.
Their silly jests were well repaid,—
In Krokaskog their laugh was laid:
Thy battle power was then well tried,
And they who won may now deride."

3.—KING EIRIK'S EXPEDITION TO NORWAY.

Magnus the Blind then went to Denmark to King Eirik Eimune, where he was well received. He offered the king to follow him if he would invade Norway with a Danish army, and subdue the country; saying, that if he came to Norway with his army, no man in Norway would venture to throw a spear against him. The king allowed himself to be moved by Magnus's persuasions, ordered a levy, and went north to Norway with 200 ships; and Magnus and his men were with him on this expedition. When they came to Viken, they proceeded peacefully and gently on the east side of the fjord; but when the fleet came westward to Tunsberg, a great number of King Inge's lendermen came against them. Their leader was Vatnorm Dagson, a brother of Gregorius. The Danes could not land to get water without many of them being killed; and therefore they went in through the fjord to Oslo, where Thjostolf Alason opposed them. It is told that some people wanted to carry the holy Halvard's coffin out of the town in the evening when the fleet was first observed, and as many as could took hold of it; but the coffin became so heavy that they could not carry it

over the church floor. The morning after, however, when they saw the fleet sailing in past the Hofud Isle, four men carried the coffin out of the town, and Thjostolf and all the townspeople followed it.

4.—THE TOWN OF OSLO BURNT.

King Eirik and his army advanced against the town; and some of his men hastened after Thjostolf and his troop. Thjostolf threw a spear at a man named Askel, which hit him under the throat, so that the spear point went through his neck; and Thjostolf thought he had never made a better spear-cast, for, except the place he hit, there was nothing bare to be seen. The shrine of St. Halvard, was taken up to Raumarike, where it remained for three months. Thjostolf went up to Raumarike, and collected men during the night, with whom he returned towards the town in the morning. In the meantime King Eirik set fire to Halvard's church, and to the town, which was entirely burnt. Thjostolf came soon after to the town with the men he had assembled, and Eirik sailed off with his fleet; but could not land anywhere on that side of the fjord, on account of the troops of the lendermen who came down against them; and wherever they attempted a landing, they left five or six men or more upon the strand. King Inge lay with a great number of people into Hornborusund, but when he learned this, he turned about southwards to Denmark again. King Inge pursued him, and took from him all the ships he could get hold of; and it was a common observation among people, that never was so poor an expedition made with so

great an armament in another king's dominions. King Eirik was ill pleased at it, and thought King Magnus and his men had been making a fool of him by encouraging him to undertake this expedition, and he declared he would never again be such friends with them as before.

5.—OF SIGURD SLEMBIDJAKN.

Sigurd Slembidjakn came that summer from the West sea to Norway, where he heard of his relation King Magnus's unlucky expedition; so he expected no welcome in Norway, but sailed south, outside the rocks, past the land, and set over to Denmark, and went into the Sound. He fell in with some Vindland cutters south of the islands, gave them battle, and gained the victory. He cleared eight ships, killing many of the men, and he hanged the others.

He also had a battle off the Island Mon with the Vindland men, and gained a victory. He then sailed from the south and came to the eastern arm of the Gaut river, and took three ships of the fleet of Thorer Hvinantorde, and Olaf, the son of Harald Kesia, who was Sigurd's own sister's son; for Ragnhild, the mother of Olaf, was a daughter of King Magnus Barefoot. He drove Olaf up the country.

Thjostolf was at this time in Konungahella, and had collected people to defend the country, and Sigurd steered thither with his fleet. They shot at each other, but he could not effect a landing; and, on both sides, many were killed and many wounded. Ulfhedin Saxolfson, Sigurd's forecastle man, fell there. He was an Icelander,

from the north quarter. Sigurd continued his course northwards to Viken and plundered far and wide around. Now when Sigurd lay in a harbour called Portyrja on Limgard's coast, and watched the ships going to or coming from Viken to plunder them, the Tunsberg men collected an armed force against him, and came unexpectedly upon them while Sigurd and his men were on shore dividing their booty. Some of the men came down from the land, but some of the other party laid themselves with their ships right across the harbour outside of them. Sigurd ran up into his ship, and rowed out against them. Vatnorm's ship was the nearest, and he let his ship fall behind the line, and Sigurd rowed clear past, and thus escaped with one ship and the loss of many men. This verse was made upon Vatnorm:[1]—

"The water serpent, people say,
From Portyrja slipped away."

6.—THE MURDER OF BEINTEIN.

Sigurd Slembidjakn sailed from thence to Denmark; and at that time a man was lost in his ship, whose name was Kolbein Thorliotson of Batald. He was sitting in a boat which was made fast to the vessel, and upset because she was sailing quickly. When they came south to Denmark, Sigurd's ship itself was cast away; but he got to Alaborg, and was there in winter. The summer after (1138) Magnus and Sigurd sailed together from the south with seven ships, and came unexpectedly in the night to Lister, where they laid their ships on the land.

[1]Vatnorm, the name of this man, means the water-serpent, and appears to have been a favourite name for war-ships also: hence the pun in the lines upon Vatnorm.—L.

Beintein Kolbeinson, a court-man of King Inge, and a very brave man, was there. Sigurd and his men jumped on shore at daylight, came unexpectedly on the people, surrounded the house, and were setting fire to the buildings; but Beintein came out of a store-house with his weapons, well armed, and stood within the door with drawn sword, his shield before him, helmet on, and ready to defend himself. The door was somewhat low. Sigurd asked which of his lads had most desire to go in against Beintein, which he called brave man's work; but none was very hurried to make ready for it. While they were discussing this matter Sigurd rushed into the house, past Beintein. Beintein struck at him, but missed him. Sigurd turned instantly on Beintein; and after exchanging blows, Sigurd gave him his death-stroke, and came out presently bearing his head in his hands.

They took all the goods that were in the farm-house, carried the booty to their ships, and sailed away. When King Inge and his friends, and also Kolbein's sons, Sigurd and Gyrd, the brothers of Beintein, heard of Beintein's murder, the king sent a great force against Sigurd Slembe and his followers; and also travelled himself, and took a ship from Hakon Paulson Pungelta, who was a daughter's son of Aslak, a son of Erling Skjalgson of Sole, and cousin of Hakon Mage. King Inge drove Hakon and his followers up the country, and took all their gear. Sigurd Stork, a son of Eindride of Gautdal, and his brother, Eirik Hæl, and Andres Kelduskit, son of Grim of Vist, all fled away into the fjords. But Sigurd Slembe, Magnus the Blind and Thorleif Skiappa sailed

outside the isles with three ships north to Halogaland; and Magnus was in winter (1139) north in Bjarkey Isle with Vidkun Jonson. But Sigurd had the stem and stern-post of his ship cut out, made a hole in her, and sank her in the inner part of Egisfjord, and thereafter he passed the winter at Tialdasund by Gljufrafjord in Hin. Far up the fjord there is a cave in the rock: in that place Sigurd sat with his followers, who were above twenty men, secretly, and hung a grey cloth before the mouth of the hole, so that no person could see them from the strand. Thorleif Skiappa, and Einar, son of Ogmund of Sand, and of Gudrun, daughter of Einar Arason of Reikiaholar, procured food for Sigurd during the winter. It is said that Sigurd made the Laplanders construct two boats for him during the winter up in the fjord; and they were fastened together with deer sinews, without nails, and with twigs of willow instead of knees, and each boat could carry twelve men. Sigurd was with the Laplanders while they were making the boats; and the Laplanders had good ale, with which they entertained Sigurd. Sigurd made these lines on it:—

"In the Lapland tent
Brave days we spent,
Under the grey birch tree;
In bed or on bank
We knew no rank,
And a merry crew were we.

"Good ale went round
As we sat on the ground,
Under the grey birch tree;
And up with the smoke
Flew laugh and joke,
And a merry crew were we."

These boats were so light that no ship could overtake them in the water, according to what was sung at the time.—

"Our skin-sewed Fin-boats lightly swim,
Over the sea like wind they skim.
Our ships are built without a nail;
Few ships like ours can row or sail."

In spring Sigurd and Magnus went south along the coast with the two boats which the Laplanders had made; and when they came to Vagar they killed Svein the priest and his two sons.

7.—OF SIGURD'S SLEMBE'S CAMPAIGN.

Thereafter Sigurd came south to Vikar, and seized King Sigurd's lendermen, William Skinnare and Thorald Kept, and killed them both. Then Sigurd turned southwards along the coast, and met Styrkar Glæsirofa south of Byrda, as he was coming from the south from the town of Nidaros, and killed him. Now when Sigurd came south to Valsnes, he met Svinagrim outside of the ness, and cut off his right hand. From thence he went south to More, past the mouth of the Throndhjem fjord, where they took Hedin Hirdmage and Kalf Kringluauge. They let Hedin escape, but killed Kalf. When King Sigurd, and his foster-father, Sadagyrd, heard of Sigurd Slembidjakn's proceedings, and what he was doing, they sent people to search for him; and their leader was Jon Kauda, a son of Kalf Range, Bishop Ivar's brother, and besides the priest Jon Smyril. They went on board the ship the Reindeer, which had twenty-two rowing benches, and was one of the swiftest sailing vessels, to seek Sigurd; but as they could not find him, they returned northwards with little glory: for people said that they had got sight of Sigurd and his people, and durst not attack them. Afterwards Sigurd proceeded southwards to Hordaland, and came to Herdla, where Einar, a son of Laxapaul, had a farm; and went into Hamar's fjord, to the Gangdaga-

thing. They took all the goods that were at the farm, and a long-ship of twenty-two benches which belonged to Einar; and also his son, four years old, who was living with one of his labouring people. Some wanted to kill the boy, but others took him and carried him with them. The labouring man said, "It will not be lucky for you to kill the child; and it will be of no use to you to carry him away, for it is my son, and not Einar's." And on his word they let the boy remain, and went away. When Einar came home he gave the labourer money to the value of two ore of gold, and thanked him for his clever invention, and promised him his constant friendship. So says Eirik Odson, who first wrote down this relation; and he heard himself Einar Paulson telling these circumstances in Bergen. Sigurd then went southward along the coast all the way east to Viken, and met Fin Saudaulfson east at Kvildar, as he was engaged in drawing in King Inge's rents and duties, and hanged him. Then they sailed south to Denmark.

8.—OF KING INGE'S LETTER TO KING SIGURD.

The people of Viken and of Bergen complained that it was wrong for King Sigurd and his friends to be sitting quietly north in the town of Nidaros, while his father's murderer was cruising about in the ordinary passage at the mouth of the Throndhjem fjord; and King Inge and his people, on the other hand, were in Viken in the midst of the danger, defending the country and holding many battles. Then King Inge sent a letter north to the merchant-town Nidaros, in which were these words: "King

Inge Haraldson sends his brother King Sigurd, as also Sadagyrd, Ogmund Svipte, Ottar Birting, and all lendermen, court-men, house-people, and all the public, rich and poor, young and old, his own and God's salutation. The misfortune is known to all men that on account of our childhood—thou being five, and I but three years of age —we can undertake nothing without the counsel of our friends and other good men. Now I and my men think that we stand nearer to the danger and necessity common to us both, than thou and thy friends; therefore make it so that thou, as soon as possible, come to me, and as strong in troops as possible, that we may be assembled to meet whatever may come. He will be our best friend who does all he can that we may be united, and may take an equal part in all things. But if thou refuse, and wilt not come after this message which I send thee in need, as thou hast done before, then thou must expect that I will come against thee with an armament: and let God decide between us; for we are not in a condition to sit here at so great an expense, and with so numerous a body of troops as are necessary here on account of the enemy, and besides many other pressing charges, whilst thou hast half of all the land-tax and other revenues of Norway. Live in the peace of God!"

9.—OTTAR BIRTING'S SPEECH.

Then Ottar Birting stood up in the Thing, and first of all answered thus: "This is King Sigurd's reply to his brother King Inge—that God will reward him for his good salutation, and likewise for the trouble and burden

which he and his friends have in this kingdom, and in matters of necessity which effect them both. Although now some think there is something sharp in King Inge's message to his brother Sigurd, yet he has in many respects sufficient cause for it. Now I will make known to you my opinion, and we will hear if King Sigurd and the other people of power will agree to it; and it is, that thou, King Sigurd, make thyself ready, with all the people who will follow thee, to defend thy country; and go as strong in men as possible to thy brother King Inge as soon as thou art prepared, in order to assist each other in all things that are for the common good; and may God Almighty strengthen and assist you both! Now, king, we will have thy words."

Peter, a son of Saudaulf, who was afterwards called Peter Byrdarsvein, bore King Sigurd to the Thing. Then the king said, "Ye must know that, if I am to advise, I will go as soon as possible to my brother King Inge." Then others spoke, one after the other; but although each began his speech in his own way, he ended with agreeing to what Ottar Birting had proposed; and it was determined to call together the war-forces, and go to the east part of the country. King Sigurd accordingly went with a great armament east to Viken, and there he met his brother King Inge.

10.—FALL OF MAGNUS THE BLIND.

The same autumn (1139) Sigurd Slembe and Magnus the Blind came from Denmark with thirty ships, manned both with Danes and Northmen. It was near to winter. When the kings heard of this, they set out with their peo-

ple eastwards to meet them. They met at Hvalar, near Holm the Grey, the day after Martinmas, which was a Sunday. King Inge and King Sigurd had twenty ships, which were all large. There was a great battle; but, after the first assault, the Danes fled home to Denmark with eighteen ships. On this Sigurd's and Magnus's ships were cleared; and as the last was almost entirely bare of men, and Magnus was lying in his bed, Hreidar Griotgardson, who had long followed him, and been his courtman, took King Magnus in his arms, and tried to run with him on board some other ship. But Hreidar was struck by a spear, which went between his shoulders; and people say King Magnus was killed by the same spear. Hreidar fell backwards upon the deck, and Magnus upon him; and every man spoke of how honourably he had followed his master and rightful sovereign. Happy are they who have such praise! There fell, on King Magnus's ship, Lodin Saupprud of Linustadar, Bruse Thormodson; and the forecastle-men to Sigurd Slembidjakn, Ivar Kolbeinson and Halvard Fæger, who had been in Sigurd Slembe's fore-hold. This Ivar had been the first who had gone in, in the night, to King Harald, and had laid hands on him. There fell a great number of the men of King Magnus and Sigurd Slembe, for Inge's men let not a single one escape if they got hold of him; but only a few are named here. They killed upon a holm more than forty men, among whom were two Icelanders—the priest Sigurd Bergthorson, a grandson of Mas; the other Clemet, a son of Are Einarson. But three Icelanders obtained their lives: namely, Ivar Skrauthanke, a son of

Kalf Range, and who afterwards was bishop of Throndhjem, and was father of the archbishop Eirik. Ivar had always followed King Magnus, and he escaped into his brother Jon Kauda's ship. Jon was married to Cecilia, a daughter of Gyrd Bardson, and was then in King Inge's and Sigurd's armament. There were three in all who escaped on board of Jon's ship. The second was Arnbjorn Ambe, who afterwards married Thorstein's daughter in Audsholt: the third was Ivar Dynta, a son of Stare, but on the mother's side of a Throndhjem family,—a very agreeable man. When the troops came to know that these three were on board his ship, they took their weapons and assaulted the vessel, and some blows were exchanged, and the whole fleet had nearly come to a fight among themselves; but it came to an agreement, so that Jon ransomed his brothers Ivar and Arnbjorn for a fixed sum in ransom, which, however, was afterwards remitted. But Ivar Dynta was taken to the shore, and beheaded; for Sigurd and Gyrd, the sons of Kolbein, would not take any mulct for him, as they knew he had been at their brother Beintein's murder. Ivar the bishop said, that never was there anything that touched him so nearly, as Ivar's going to the shore under the axe, and turning to the others with the wish they they might meet in joy hereafter. Gudrid Birger's daughter, a sister of Archbishop Jon, told Eirik Odson that she heard Bishop Ivar say this.

11.—SIGURD SLEMBE TAKEN PRISONER.

A man called Thrand Gialdkere was the steersman of King Inge's ship. It was come so far, that Inge's men

were rowing in small boats between the ships after those who were swimming in the water, and killed those they could get hold of. Sigurd Slembe threw himself overboard after his ship had lost her crew, stripped off his armour under the water, and then swam with his shield over him. Some men from Thrand's vessel took prisoner a man who was swimming, and were about to kill him; but he begged his life, and offered to tell them where Sigurd Slembe was, and they agreed to it. Shields and spears, dead men, weapons, and clothes, were floating all around on the sea about the ships, "Ye can see," said he, "a red shield floating on the water: he is under it." They rowed to it immediately, took him, and brought him on board of Thrand's ship. Thrand then sent a message to Thjostolf, Ottar, and Amunde. Sigurd Slembe had a tinder box on him, and the tinder was in a walnut-shell, around which there was wax. This is related, because it seems an ingenious way of preserving it from ever getting wet. He swam with a shield over him, because nobody could know one shield from another where so many were floating about; and they would never have hit upon him, if they had not been told where he was. When Thrand came to the land with Sigurd, and it was told to the troops that he was taken, the army set up a shout of joy. When Sigurd heard it he said, "Many a bad man will rejoice over my head this day." Then Thjostolf Alason went to where Sigurd was sitting, struck from his head a silk hat with silver fringes, and said, "Why wert thou so impudent, thou son of a slave! to dare to call thyself King Magnus Barefoot's son?"

Sigurd replied, "Presume not to compare my father to a slave; for thy father was of little worth compared to mine."

Hal, a son of the doctor Thorgeir Steinson, King Inge's court-man, was present at this circumstance, and told it to Eirik Odson, who afterwards wrote these relations in a book, which he called *Hryggjarstykke*. In this book is told all concerning Harald Gille and his sons, and Magnus the Blind, and Sigurd Slembidjakn, until their deaths. Eirik was a sensible man, who was long in Norway about that time. Some of his narratives he wrote down from Hakon Mage's account; some were from lendermen of Harald's sons, who along with his sons were in all this feud, and in all the councils. Eirik names, moreover, several men of understanding and veracity, who told him these accounts, and were so near that they saw or heard all that happened. Something he wrote from what he himself had heard or seen.

12.—TORTURE OF SIGURD SLEMBE.

Hal says that the chiefs wished to have Sigurd killed instantly; but the men who were the most cruel, and thought they had injuries to avenge, advised torturing him; and for this they named Beintein's brothers, Sigurd and Gyrd, the sons of Kolbein. Peter Byrdarsvein would also avenge his brother Fin. But the chiefs and the greater part of the people went away. They broke his shin-bones and arms with an axe-hammer. Then they stripped him, and would flay him alive; but when they tried to take off the skin, they could not do it for the gush

of blood. They took leather whips and flogged him so long, that the skin was as much taken off as if he had been flayed. Then they stuck a piece of wood in his back until it broke, dragged him to a tree and hanged him; and then cut off his head, and brought the body and head to a heap of stones and buried them there. All acknowledge, both enemies and friends, that no man in Norway, within memory of the living, was more gifted with all perfections, or more experienced, than Sigurd; but in some respects he was an unlucky man. Hal says that he spoke little, and answered only a few, and in single words, under his tortures, although they spoke to him. Hal says further, that he never moved when they tortured him, more than if they were striking a stock or a stone. This Hal alleged as proof that he was a brave hero, who had courage to endure tortures; for he still held his tongue, and never moved from the spot. And farther he says that he never altered his voice in the least, but spoke with as much ease as if he was sitting at the ale-table; neither speaking higher nor lower, nor in a more tremulous voice than he was used to do. He spoke until he gave up the ghost, and sang between whiles parts of the Psalm-book, and which Hal considered beyond the powers and strength of ordinary men. And the priest who had the church in the neighbourhood let Sigurd's body be transported thither to the church. This priest was a friend of Harald's sons: but when they heard it they were angry at him, had the body carried back to where it had been, and made the priest pay a fine. Sigurd's friends afterwards came from Denmark with a ship for his body, carried it to Alaborg,

and interred it in Mary church in that town. So said Dean Ketil, who officiated as priest at Mary church, to Eirik; and that Sigurd was buried there. Thjostolf Alason transported Magnus the Blind's body to Oslo, and buried it in Halvard's church, beside King Sigurd his father. Lodin Saupprud was transported to Tunsberg; but the others of the slain were buried on the spot.

13.—EYSTEIN HARALDSON COMES TO NORWAY.

When the kings Sigurd and Inge had ruled over Norway about six years, Eystein, who was a son of Harald Gille, came in spring from Scotland (1142). Arne Sturla, Thorleif Brynjolfson, and Kolbein Hruga had sailed westward over the sea after Eystein, accompanied him to Norway, and sailed immediately with him to Throndhjem. The Throndhjem people received him well; and at the Eyra-thing of Ascension-day he was chosen king, so that he should have the third part of Norway with his brothers Sigurd and Inge. They were at this time in the east part of the country; and men went between the kings who brought about a peace, and that Eystein should have a third part of the kingdom. People believed what he said of his paternal descent, because King Harald himself had testified to it, and he did not resort to the ordeal of iron. King Eystein's mother was called Bjadok, and she followed him to Norway. Magnus was the name of King Harald Gille's fourth son, who was fostered by Kyrpingaorm. He also was chosen king, and got a fourth part of the country; but Magnus was deformed in his feet, lived but a short time, and died in his bed. Einar Skulason speaks of them:—

"The generous Eystein money gave;
Sigurd in fight was quick and brave;
Inge loved well the war-alarm;
Magnus to save his land from harm.
No country boasts a nobler race
The battle-field, or Thing, to grace.
Four brothers of such high pretence
The sun ne'er shone upon at once."

14.—MURDER OF OTTAR BIRTING.

After King Harald Gille's death Queen Ingerid married Ottar Birting, who was a lendermen and a great chief, and of a Throndhjem family, who strengthened King Inge's government much while he was in his childhood. King Sigurd was not very friendly to Ottar; because, as he thought, Ottar always took King Inge's side. Ottar Birting was killed north in the merchant town (Nidaros), in an assault upon him in the twilight as he was going to the evening song. When he heard the whistling of the blow he held up his cloak with his hands against it; thinking, no doubt, it was a snowball thrown at him, as young boys do in the streets. Ottar fell by the stroke; but his son, Alf Hrode, who just at the same moment was coming into the churchyard, saw his father's fall, and saw that the man who had killed him ran east about the church. Alf ran after him, and killed him at the corner of the choir; and people said that he had good luck in avenging his father, and afterwards was much more respected than he had been before.

15.—BEGINNING OF KING EYSTEIN.

King Eystein Haraldson was in the interior of the Throndhjem district when he heard of Ottar's murder, and summoned to him the bonde-army, with which he proceeded to the town; and he had many men. Ottar's relations and other friends accused King Sigurd, who

was in the town, of having instigated this deed; and the bondes were much enraged against him. But the king offered to clear himself by the ordeal of iron, and thereby to establish the truth of his denial; and accordingly a peace was made. King Sigurd went to the south end of the country, and the ordeal was never afterwards heard of.

16.—BEGINNING OF ORM THE KING-BROTHER.

Queen Ingerid had a son to Ivar Sneis, and he was called Orm, and got the surname of King-brother. He was a handsome man in appearance, and became a great chief, as shall be told hereafter. Ingerid afterwards married Arne of Stodreim, who was from this called King's-mate; and their children were Inge, Nikolas, Philip of Herdla, and Margaret, who was first married to Bjorn Buk, and afterwards to Simon Karason.

17.—JOURNEY OF ERLING SKAKKE AND EARL RAGNVALD.

Kyrpingaorm and Ragnhild, a daughter of Sveinke Steinarson, had a son called Erling. Kyrpingaorm was a son of Svein Sveinson, who was a son of Erling of Gerd. Orm's mother was Ragna, a daughter of Earl Orm Eilifson and Sigrid, a daughter of Earl Fin Arnason. The mother of Earl Orm was Ragnhild, a daughter of Earl Hakon the Great. Erling was a man of understanding, and a great friend of King Inge, by whose assistance and counsel Erling obtained in marriage Christina, a daughter of King Sigurd the Crusader and Queen Malmfrid. Erling possessed a farm at Studla in South Hordaland. Erling left the country; and with him went

Eindride Unge and several lendermen, who had chosen men with them. They intended to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and went across the West sea to Orkney. There Earl Ragnvald and Bishop William joined them; and they had in all fifteen ships from Orkney, with which they first sailed to the South Hebrides, from thence west to Valland, and then the same way King Sigurd the Crusader had sailed to Norvasund; and they plundered all around in the heathen part of Spain. Soon after they had sailed through the Norvasund, Eindride Unge and his followers, with six ships, separated from them; and then each was for himself. Earl Ragnvald and Erling Skakke fell in with a large ship of burden at sea called a dromund, and gave battle to it with nine ships. At last they laid their cutters close under the dromund; but the heathens threw both weapons and stones, and pots full of pitch and boiling oil. Erling laid his ship so close under the dromund, that the missles of the heathens fell without his ship. Then Erling and his men cut a hole in the dromund, some working below and some above the watermark; and so they boarded the vessel through it. So says Thorbjorn Skakkaskald, in his poem on Erling:—

"The axes of the Northmen bold
A door into the huge ships' hold
Hewed through her high and curved side,
As snug beneath her bulge they ride.
Their spears bring down the astonished foe,
Who cannot see from whence the blow.
The eagle's prey, they, man by man,
Fall by the Northmen's daring plan."

Audunraude, Erling's forecastle-man, was the first man who got into the dromund. Then they carried her, killing an immense number of people; making an extraordinarily valuable booty, and gaining a famous vic-

tory. Earl Ragnvald and Erling Skakke came to Palestine in the course of their expedition, and all the way to the river Jordan. From thence they went first to Constantinople, where they left their ships, travelled northwards by land, and arrived in safety in Norway, where their journey was highly praised. Erling Skakke appeared now a much greater man than before, both on account of his journey and of his marriage; besides he was a prudent sensible man, rich, of great family, eloquent, and devoted to King Inge by the strictest friendship more than to the other royal brothers.

18.—BIRTH OF HAKON HERDEBREID.

King Sigurd went to a feast east in Viken along with his court, and rode past a house belonging to a great bonde called Simon. While the king was riding past the house, he heard within such beautiful singing that he was quite enchanted with it, and rode up to the house, and saw a lovely girl standing at the handmill and grinding. The king got off his horse, and went to the girl and courted her. When the king went away, the bonde Simon came to know what the object of the king's visit had been. The girl was called Thora, and she was Simon the bonde's servant-girl. Simon took good care of her afterwards, and the girl brought forth a male child (1047), who was called Hakon, and was considered King Sigurd's son. Hakon was brought up by Simon Thorbergson and his wife Gunhild. Their own sons also, Onund and Andreas, were brought up with Hakon, and were so dear to him that death only could have parted them.

19.—EYSTEIN AND THE PEASANTS OF HISING ISLE.

While King Eystein Haraldson was in Viken, he fell into disputes with the bondes of Reine and the inhabitants of Hising Isle, who assembled to oppose him; but he gave them battle at a place called Leikberg, and afterwards burnt and destroyed all around in Hising; so that the bondes submitted to his will, paid great fines to the king, and he took hostages from them. So says Einar Skulason:—

"The Viken men
Won't strive again,
With words or blows,
The king to oppose.

None safety found
On Viken's ground,
Till all, afraid,
Pledge and scat paid."

And further:—

"The king came near;
He who is dear
To all good men
Came down the glen,

By Leikberg hill.
They who do ill,
The Reine folk, fly,
Or quarter cry."

20.—WAR EXPEDITION OF KING HARALDSON.

Soon after King Eystein began his journey out of the country over sea to the West (1153), and sailed first to Caithness. Here he heard that Earl Harald Maddad's son was in Thursa, to which he sailed directly in three small boats. The earl had a ship of thirty banks of oars, and nearly eighty men in her. But they were not prepared to make resistance, so that King Eystein was able to board the ship with his men; and he took the earl prisoner, and carried him to his own ship, but the earl ransomed himself with three marks of gold: and thus they parted. Einar Skulason tells of it thus:—

"Earl Harald in his stout ship lay
On the bright sand in Thursa bay;
With fourscore men he had no fear,
Nor thought the Norse king was so near,

He who provides the eagle's meals
In three small boats along-shore steals;
And Maddad's son must ransom pay
For his bad outlook that fair day."

From thence King Eystein sailed south along the east side of Scotland, and brought up at a merchant-town in Scotland called Aberdeen, where he killed many people, and plundered the town. So says Einar Skulason:—

"At Aberdeen, too, I am told,
Fell many by our Norsemen bold;
Peace was disturbed, and blue swords broke
ith many a hard and bloody stroke."

The next battle was at Hartlepool in the south, with a party of horsemen. The king put them to flight, and seized some ships there. So says Einar:—

"At Hartlepool, in rank and row,
The king's court-men attack the foe.
The king's sharp sword in blood was red,
Blood dropped from every Norse spear-head.
Ravens rejoice o'er the warm food
Of English slain, each where he stood;
And in the ships their thirst was quenched:
The decks were in the foe's blood drenched."

Then he went southwards to England, and had his third battle at Whitby, and gained the victory, and burnt the town. So says Einar:—

"The ring of swords, the clash of shields,
Were loud in Whitby's peaceful fields;
For here the king stirred up the strife,—
Man against man, for death or life.
O'er roof and tower, rose on high
The red wrath-fire in the sky:
House after house the red fiend burns;
By blackened walls the poor man mourns."

Thereafter he plundered wide around in England, where Stephen was then the king. After this King Eystein fought with some cavalry at Skarpasker. So says Einar:—

"At Skarpasker the English horse
Retire before the Norse king's force:
The arrow-shower like snow-drift flew,
And the shield-covered foemen slew."

He fought next at Pilavik, and gained the victory. So says Einar:—

"At Pilavik the wild wolf feeds,
Well furnished by the king's brave deeds:
He poured upon the grass-green plain
A red shower from the Perthmen slain.
On westwards to the sea he urges,
With fire and sword the country purges:
Langtown he burns; the country rang,
For sword on shield incessant clang."

Here they burnt Langatun, a large village; and people say that the town has never since risen to its former condition. After this King Eystein left England in autumn, and returned to Norway. People spoke in various ways about this expedition.

21.—OF HARALD'S SONS.

There was good peace maintained in Norway in the first years of the government of Harald's sons; and as long as their old counsellors were alive, there was some kind of unanimity among them. While Inge and Sigurd were in their childhood, they had a court together; but Eystein, who was come to age of discretion, had a court for himself. But when Inge's and Sigurd's counsellors were dead,—namely, Sadagyrd Bardson, Ottar Birting, Amunde Gyrdson, Thjostolf Alason, Ogmund Svipter, and Ogmund Denger, a brother of Erling Skakke (Erling was not much looked up to while Ogmund lived),—the two kings, Inge and Sigurd divided their courts. King Inge then got great assistance from Gregorius Dagson, a son of Dag Eilifson by Ragnhild a daughter of Skapte Ogmundson. Gregorius had much property, and was himself a thriving, sagacious man. He presided in the governing the country under King Inge, and the king allowed him to manage his property for him according to his own judgment.

22.—HABITS AND MANNERS OF HARALD'S SONS.

When King Sigurd grew up he was a very ungovernable, restless man in every way; and so was King Eystein, but Eystein was the more reasonable of the two. King Sigurd was a stout and strong man, of a brisk appearance; he had light brown hair, an ugly mouth; but otherwise a well-shaped countenance. He was polite in his conversation beyond any man, and was expert in all exercises. Einar Skulason speaks of this:—

"Sigurd, expert in every way
To wield the sword in bloody fray,
Showed well that to the bold and brave
God always luck and vict'ry gave.
In speech, as well as bloody deeds,
The king all other men exceeds;
And when he speaks we think that none
Has said a word but he alone."

King Eystein was dark and dingy in complexion, of middle height, and a prudent able man; but what deprived him of consideration and popularity with those under him were his avarice and narrowness. He was married to Ragna, a daughter of Nicolas Mase. King Inge was the handsomest among them in countenance. He had yellow but rather thin hair, which was much curled. His stature was small; and he had difficulty in walking alone, because he had one foot withered, and he had a hump both on his back and his breast. He was of cheerful conversation, and friendly towards his friends; was generous, and allowed other chiefs to give him counsel in governing the country. He was popular, therefore, with the public; and all this brought the kingdom and the mass of the people on his side. King Harald Gille's daughter Brigida was first married to the Swedish king Inge Halsteinson, and afterwards to Earl Karl Sonason, and then to the Swedish king Magnus. She and King Inge Haraldson were

cousins by the mother's side. At last Brigida married Earl Birger Brose, and they had four sons; namely, Earl Philip, Earl Knut, Folke, and Magnus. Their daughters were Ingegerd, who was married to the Swedish king Sorkver, and their son was King Jon; a second daughter was called Kristin, and a third Margaret. Harald Gille's second daughter was called Maria, who was married to Simon Skalp, a son of Halkel Huk; and their son was called Nikolas. King Harald Gille's third daughter was called Margaret, who was married to Jon Halkelson, a brother of Simon. Now many things occurred between the brothers which occasioned differences and disputes; but I will only relate what appears to me to have produced the more important events.

23.—CARDINAL NIKOLAS COMES TO THE COUNTRY.

In the days of Harald's sons Cardinal Nikolas came from Rome to Norway, being sent there by the pope. The cardinal had taken offence at the brothers Sigurd and Eystein, and they were obliged to come to a reconciliation with him; but, on the other hand, he stood on the most affectionate terms with King Inge, whom he called his son. Now when they were all reconciled with him, he moved them to let Jon Birgerson be consecrated archbishop of Throndhjem and gave him a vestment which is called a pallium; and settled moreover that the archbishop's seat should be in Nidaros, in Christ church, where King Olaf the Saint reposes. Before that time there had only been common bishops in Norway. The cardinal introduced also the law, that no man should go

unpunished who appeared with arms in the merchant-town, excepting the twelve men who were in attendancce on the king. He improved many of the customs of the Northmen while he was in the country. There never came a foreigner to Norway whom all men respected so highly, or who could govern the people so well as he did. After some time he returned to the South with many friendly presents, and declared ever afterwards that he was the greatest friend of the people of Norway. When he came south to Rome the former pope died suddenly, and all the people of Rome would have Cardinal Nikolas for pope, and he was consecrated under the name of Adrian; and according to the report of men who went to Rome in his days, he had never any business, however important, to settle with other people, but he would break it off to speak with the Northmen who desired to see him. He was not long pope, and is now considered a saint.

24.—MIRACLE OF KING OLAF.

In the time of Harald Gille's sons, it happened that a man called Haldor fell into the hands of the Vindland people, who took him and mutilated him, cut open his neck, took out the tongue through the opening, and cut out his tongue root. He afterwards sought out the holy King Olaf, fixed his mind entirely on the holy man, and weeping besought King Olaf to restore his speech and health. Thereupon he immediately recovered his speech by the good king's compassion, went immediately into his service for all his life, and became an excellent trustworthy man. This miracle took place a fortnight before

the last Olafsmas, upon the day that Cardinal Nikolas set foot on the land of Norway.

25.—MIRACLES OF KING OLAF ON RICHARD.

In the Uplands were two brothers, men of great family, and men of fortune, Einar and Andres, sons of Guthorm Grabard, and brothers of King Sigurd Haraldson's mother; and they had great properties and udal estates in that quarter. They had a sister who was very handsome, but did not pay sufficient regard to the scandal of evil persons, as it afterwards appeared. She was on a friendly footing with an English priest called Richard, who had a welcome to the house of her brothers, and on account of their friendship for him she did many things to please him, and often to his advantage; but the end of all this was, that an ugly report flew about concerning this girl. When this came into the mouth of the public all men threw the blame on the priest. Her brothers did the same, and expressed publicly, as soon as they observed it, that they laid the blame most on him. The great friendship that was between the girl and the priest proved a great misfortune to both, which might have been expected, as the brothers were silent about their secret determination, and let nothing be observed. But one day they called the priest to them, who went, expecting nothing but good from them; enticed him from home with them, saying that they intended to go to another district, where they had some needful business, and inviting him to go with them. They had with them a farm-servant who knew their purpose. They went in a boat

along the shore of a lake which is called Rands lake, and landed at a ness called Skiptisand, where they went on shore and amused themselves awhile. Then they went to a retired place, and commanded their servant-man to strike the priest with an axe-hammer. He struck the priest so hard that he swooned; but when he recovered he said, "Why are ye playing so roughly with me?" They replied, "Although nobody has told thee of it before, thou shalt now find the consequence of what thou hast done." They then upbraided him; but he denied their accusations, and besought God and the holy King Olaf to judge between them. Then they broke his leg-bones, and dragged him bound to the forest with them; and then they put a string around his head, and put a board under his head and shoulders, and made a knot on the string, and bound his head fast to the board. Then the elder brother, Einar, took a wedge, and put it on the priest's eye, and the servant who stood beside him struck upon it with an axe, so that the eye flew out, and fell upon the board. Then he set the pin upon the other eye, and said to the servant, "Strike now more softly." He did so, and the wedge sprang from the eye-stone, and tore the eyelid loose. Then Einar took up the eyelid in his hand, and saw that the eye-stone was still in its place; and he set the wedge on the cheek, and when the servant struck it the eye-stone sprang out upon the cheek-bone. Thereafter they opened his mouth, took his tongue and cut it off, and then untied his hands and his head. As soon as he came to himself, he thought of laying the eye-stones in their place under the eyelids, and pressing them

with both hands as much as he could. Then they carried him on board, and went to a farm called Sæheimrud, where they landed. They sent up to the farm to say that a priest was lying in the boat at the shore. While the message was going to the farm, they asked the priest if he could talk; and he made a noise and attempted to speak. Then said Einar to his brother, "If he recover and the stump of his tongue grow, I am afraid he will get his speech again." Thereupon they seized the stump with a pair of tongs, drew it out, cut it twice, and the third time to the very roots, and left him lying half dead. The housewife in the farm was poor; but she hastened to the place with her daughter, and they carried the priest home to their farm in their cloaks. They then brought a priest, and when he arrived he bound all his wounds; and they attended to his comfort as much as they were able. And thus lay the wounded priest grievously handled, but trusting alway to God's grace, and never doubting; and although he was speechless, he prayed to God in thought with a sorrowful mind, but with the more confidence the worse he was. He turned his thoughts also to the mild King Olaf the Saint, God's dear favourite, of whose excellent deeds he had heard so much told, and trusted so much more zealously on him with all his heart for help in his necessity. As he lay there lame, and deprived of all strength, he wept bitterly, moaned, and prayed with a sore heart that the dear King Olaf would help him. Now when this wounded priest was sleeping after midnight, he thought he saw a gallant man coming to him, who spoke these words, "Thou art ill off, friend Richard,

and thy strength is little." He thought he replied to this assentingly. Then the man accosted him again, "Thou requirest compassion?" The priest replies, "I need the compassion of Almighty God and the holy King Olaf." He answered, "Thou shalt get it." Thereupon he pulled the tongue-stump so hard that it gave the priest pain; then he stroked with his hands his eyes, and legs, and other wounded members. Then the priest asked who he was. He looked at him, and said, "Olaf, come here from Throndhjem;" and then disappeared. But the priest awoke altogether sound, and thus he spoke: "Happy am I, and thanks be to the Almighty God and the holy King Olaf, who have restored me!" Dreadfully mishandled as he had been, yet so quickly was he restored from his misfortune that he scarcely thought he had been wounded or sick. His tongue was entire; both his eyes were in their places, and were clear-sighted; his broken legs and every other wound were healed, or were free from pain; and, in short, he had got perfect health. But as a proof that his eyes had been punched out, there remained a white scar on each eyelid, in order that this dear king's excellence might be manifest on the man who had been so dreadfully misused.

26.—KING INGE AND SIGURD HOLD A THING.

King Eystein and King Sigurd had quarrelled, because King Sigurd had killed King Eystein's court-man Harald, the Viken man, who owned a house in Bergen, and also the priest Jon Tapard, a son of Bjarne Sigurdson. On account of this affair, a conference to settle it

was appointed in winter in the Uplands. The two sat together in the conference for a long time, and so much was known of their conference that all three brothers were to meet the following summer in Bergen. It was added, that their conference was to the effect that King Inge should have two or three farms, and as much income as would keep thirty men beside him, as he had not health to be a king. When King Inge and Gregorius heard this report, they came to Bergen with many followers. King Sigurd arrived there a little later, and was not nearly so strong in men. Sigurd and Inge had then been nineteen years kings of Norway (1155). King Eystein came later still from the south than the other two from the north. Then King Inge ordered the Thing to be called together on the holm by the sound of trumpet; and Sigurd and Inge came to it with a great many people. Gregorius had two long-ships, and at the least ninety men, whom he kept in provisions. He kept his house-men better than other lendermen; for he never took part in any entertainment where each guest brings his liquor, without having all his house-men to drink with him. He went now to the Thing in a gold-mounted helmet, and all his men had helmets on. Then King Inge stood up, and told the assembly what he had heard; how his brothers were going to use him, and depose him from his kingdom; and asked for their assistance. The assembled people made a good return to his speech, and declared they would follow him.

27.—OF GREGORIUS DAGSON.

Then King Sigurd stood up and said it was a false

accusation that King Inge had made against him and his brother, and insisted that Gregorius had invented it; and insinuated that it would not be long, if he had his will, before they should meet so that the golden helmet should be doffed; and ended his speech by hinting that they could not both live. Gregorius replied, that Sigurd need not long so much for this, as he was ready now, if it must be so. A few days after, one of Gregorius's house-men was killed out upon the street, and it was Sigurd's house-men who killed him. Gregorius would then have fallen upon King Sigurd and his people; but King Inge, and many others, kept him back. But one evening, just as Queen Ingerid, King Inge's mother, was coming from vespers, she came past where Sigurd Skrudhyrna, a court-man of King Inge, lay murdered. He was then an old man, and had served many kings. King Sigurd's court-men, Halvard Gunnarson, and Sigurd, a son of Eystein Trafale, had killed him; and people suspected it was done by order of King Sigurd. She went immediately to King Inge, and told him he would be a little king if he took no concern, but allowed his court-men to be killed, the one after the other, like swine. The king was angry at her speech; and while they were scolding about it, came Gregorius in helmet and armour, and told the king not to be angry, for she was only saying the truth. "And I am now," says he, "come to thy assistance, if thou wilt attack King Sigurd; and here we are, above 100 men in helmets and armour, and with them we will attack where others think the attack may be worst." But the most dissuaded from this course, thinking that Sigurd would pay the

mulct for the slaughter done. Now when Gregorius saw that there would be no assault, he accosted King Inge thus: "Thou wilt frighten thy men from thee in this way; for first they lately killed my house-man, and now thy court-man, and afterwards they will chase me, or some other of thy lendermen whom thou wouldst feel the loss of, when they see that thou art indifferent about such things; and at last, after thy friends are killed, they will take the royal dignity from thee. Whatever thy other lendermen may do, I will not stay here longer to be slaughtered like an ox; but Sigurd the king and I have a business to settle with each other to-night, in whatever way it may turn out. It is true that there is but little help in thee on account of thy ill health, but I should think thy will should not be less to hold thy hand over thy friends, and I am now quite ready to go from hence to meet Sigurd, and my banner is flying in the yard."

Then King Inge stood up, and called for his arms, and ordered every man who wished to follow him to get ready, declaring it was of no use to try to dissuade him; for he had long enough avoided this, but now steel must determine between them.

28.—OF KING SIGURD'S FALL.

King Sigurd sat and drank in Sigrid Sæta's house ready for battle, although people thought it would not come to an assault at all. Then came King Inge with his men down the road from the smithy shops, against the house. Arne, the king's brother-in-law, came out from the Sand-bridge, Aslak Erlendson from his own house,

and Gregorius from the street where all thought the assault would be worst. King Sigurd and his men made many shots from the holes in the loft, broke down the fireplaces, and threw stones on them. Gregorius and his men cut down the gates of the yard; and there in the port fell Einar, a son of Laxapaul, who was of Sigurd's people, together with Halvard Gunnarson, who was shot in a loft, and nobody lamented his death. They hewed down the houses, and many of King Sigurd's men left him, and surrendered for quarter. Then King Sigurd went up into a loft, and desired to be heard. He had a gilt shield, by which they knew him, but they would not listen to him, and shot arrows at him as thick as snow in a snow-shower, so that he could not stay there. As his men had now left him, and the houses were being hewn down, he went out from thence, and with him his court-man Thord Husfreyja from Viken. They wanted to come where King Inge was to be found, and Sigurd called to his brother King Inge, and begged him to grant him life and safety; but both Thord and Sigurd were instantly killed, and Thord fell with great glory. King Sigurd was interred in the old Christ church out on the holm. King Inge gave Gregorius the ship King Sigurd had owned. There fell many of King Sigurd's and King Inge's men, although I only name a few; but of Gregorius's men there fell four; and also some who belonged to no party, but were shot on the piers, or out in the ships. It was fought on a Friday, and fourteen days before Saint John the Baptist's day (June 10, 1155). Two or three days after King Eystein came from

the eastward with thirty ships, and had along with him his brother's son Hakon, a son of King Sigurd. Eystein did not come up to the town, but lay in Floruvagar, and good men went between to get a reconciliation made. But Gregorius wanted that they should go out against him, thinking there never would be a better opportunity; and offered to be himself the leader. "For thou, king, shalt not go, for we have no want of men." But many dissuaded from this course, and it came to nothing. King Eystein returned back to Viken, and King Inge to Throndhjem, and they were in a sort reconciled; but they did not meet each other.

29.—OF GREGORIUS DAGSON.

Somewhat later than King Eystein, Gregorius Dagson also set out to the eastward and came to his farm Bratsberg in Hofund; but King Eystein was up in the fjord at Oslo, and had his ships drawn above two miles over the frozen sea, for there was much ice at that time in Viken. King Eystein went up to Hofund to take Gregorius; but he got news of what was on foot, and escaped to Thelemark with ninety men, from thence over the mountains, and came down in Hardanger; and at last to Studla in Etne, to Erling Skakke's farm. Erling himself had gone north to Bergen; but his wife Kristin, a daughter of King Sigurd, was at home, and offered Gregorius all the assistance he wanted; and he was hospitably received. He got a long-ship there which belonged to Erling, and everything else he required. Gregorius thanked her kindly, and allowed that she had behaved

nobly, and as might have been expected of her. Gregorius then proceeded to Bergen, where he met Erling, who thought also that his wife had done well.

30.—RECONCILIATION OF EYSTEIN AND INGE.

Then Gregorius went north to Throndhjem, and came there before Yule. King Inge was rejoiced at his safety, and told him to use his property as freely as his own, King Eystein having burnt Gregorius's house, and slaughtered his stock of cattle. The ship-docks which King Eystein the Elder had constructed in the merchant town of Nidaros, and which had been exceedingly expensive, were also burnt this winter, together with some good vessels belonging to King Inge. This deed was ascribed to King Eystein and Philip Gyrdson, King Sigurd's foster-brother, and occasioned much displeasure and hatred. The following summer King Inge went south with a very numerous body of men; and King Eystein came northwards, gathering men also. They met in the east (1156) at the Seleys, near to the Naze; but King Inge was by far the strongest in men. It was nearly coming to a battle; but at last they were reconciled on these conditions,—that King Eystein should be bound to pay forty-five marks of gold, of which King Inge should have thirty marks, because King Eystein had occasioned the burning of the docks and ships; and, besides, that Philip, and all who had been accomplices in the deed, should be outlawed. Also that the men should be banished the country, against whom it could be proved that they gave blow or wound to King Sigurd; for King Eystein accused King

Inge of protecting these men; and that Gregorius should have fifteen marks of gold for the value of his property burnt by King Eystein. King Eystein was ill pleased with these terms, and looked upon the treaty as one forced upon him. From that meeting King Inge went eastward to Viken, and King Eystein north to Throndhjem; and they had no intercourse with each other, nor were the messages which passed between them very friendly, and on both sides they killed each other's friends. King Eystein, besides, did not pay the money; and the one accused the other of not fulfilling what was promised. King Inge and Gregorius enticed many people from King Eystein; among others, Bard Standale Brynjolfson, Simon Skalp, a son of Halkel Huk, Halder Brynjolfson, Jon Halkelson, and many other lendermen.

31.—OF EYSTEIN AND INGE.

Two years after King Sigurd's fall (1157) both kings assembled armaments; namely, King Inge in the east of the country, where he collected eighty ships; and King Eystein in the north, where he had forty-five, and among these the Great Dragon, which King Eystein Magnuson had built after the Long Serpent; and they had on both sides many and excellent troops. King Inge lay with his ships south at Moster Isle, and King Eystein a little to the north in Græningasund. King Eystein sent the young Aslak Jonson, and Arne Sturla, a son of Snæbjorn, with one ship to meet King Inge; but when the king's men knew them they assaulted them, killed many of their people, and took all that was in the ship belonging

to them. Aslak and Arne and a few more escaped to the land, went to King Eystein, and told him how King Inge had received them. Thereupon King Eystein held a House-thing, and told his followers how ill King Inge had treated his men, and desired the troops to follow him. "I have," said he, "so many, and such excellent men, that I have no intention to fly, if ye will follow me." But this speech was not received with much favour. Halkel Huk was there; but both his sons, Simon and Jon, were with King Inge. Halkel replied, so loud that many heard him, "Let thy chests of gold follow thee, and let them defend thy land."

32.—KING EYSTEIN'S DEATH.

In the night many of King Eystein's ships rowed secretly away, some of them joining King Inge, some going to Bergen, or up into the fjords; so that when it was daylight in the morning the king was lying behind with only ten ships. Then he left the Great Dragon, which was heavy to row, and several other vessels behind; and cut and destroyed the Dragon, started out the ale, and destroyed all that they could not take with them. King Eystein went on board of the ship of Eindride, a son of Jon Mornef, sailed north into Sogn, and then took the land-road eastwards to Viken. King Inge took the vessels, and sailed with them outside of the isles to Viken. King Eystein had then got east as far as Fold, and had with him 1200 men; but when they saw King Inge's force, they did not think themselves sufficiently strong to oppose him, and they retired to the forest. Every one fled his own way, so that the king was left

with but one man. King Inge and his men observed King Eystein's flight, and also that he had but few people with him, and they went immediately to search for him. Simon Skalp met the king just as he was coming out of a willow bush. Simon saluted him. "God save you, sire," said he.

The king replied, "I do not know if thou are not sire here."

Simon replied, "That is as it may happen."

The king begged him to conceal him, and said it was proper to do so. "For there was long friendship between us, although it has now gone differently."

Simon replied, it could not be.

Then the king begged that he might hear mass before he died, which accordingly took place. Then Eystein laid himself down on his face on the grass, stretched out his hands on each side, and told them to cut the sign of the cross between his shoulders, and see whether he could not bear steel as King Inge's followers had asserted of him. Simon told the man who had to put the king to death to do so immediately, for the king had been creeping about upon the grass long enough. He was accordingly slain, and he appears to have suffered manfully. His body was carried to Fors, and lay all night under the hill at the south side of the church. King Eystein was buried in Fors church, and his grave is in the middle of the church-floor, where a fringed canopy is spread over it, and he is considered a saint. Where he was executed, and his blood ran upon the ground, sprang up a fountain, and another under the hill where his body lay all night. From both

these waters many think they have received a cure of sickness and pain. It is reported by the Viken people that many miracles were wrought at King Eystein's grave, until his enemies poured upon it soup made of boiled dog's flesh. Simon Skalp was much hated for this deed, which was generally ascribed to him; but some said that when King Eystein was taken Simon sent a message to King Inge, and the king commanded that King Eystein should not come before his face. So King Sverre has caused it to be written; but Einar Skulason tells of it thus:—

> "Simon Skalp, the traitor bold,
> For deeds of murder known of old,
> His king betrayed; and ne'er will he
> God's blessed face hereafter see."

SAGA OF HAKON HERDEBREID (HAKON THE BROAD-SHOULDERED).[1]

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THIS saga describes the feud between Hakon Sigurdson and his uncle Inge.

The only skald quoted is Einar Skulason.

1.—BEGINNING OF HAKON HERDEBREID.

Hakon, King Sigurd's son, was chosen chief of the troop which had followed King Eystein, and his adherents gave him the title of king. He was ten years old. At that time he had with him Sigurd, a son of Halvard Hauld of Reyr, and Andreas and Onund, the sons of Simon, his foster-brothers, and many chiefs, friends of King Sigurd and King Eystein; and they went first up to Gautland. King Inge took possession of all the estates they had left behind, and declared them banished. Thereafter King Inge went to Viken, and was sometimes also in the north of the country. Gregorius Dagson was in Konungahella, where the danger was greatest, and had beside him a strong and handsome body of men, with which he defended the country.

2.—OF GREGORIUS DAGSON.

The summer after (1158) Hakon came with his men, and proceeded to Konungahella with a numerous and

[1]The period is from 1157 to 1161.—L.

handsome troop. Gregorius was then in the town, and summoned the bondes and townspeople to a great Thing, at which he desired their aid; but he thought the people did not hear him with much favour, so he did not much trust them. Gregorius set off with two ships to Viken, and was very much cast down. He expected to meet King Inge there, having heard he was coming with a great army to Viken. Now when Gregorius had come but a short way north he met Simon Skalp, Haldor Brynjolfson, and Gyrd Amundason, King Inge's foster-brothers. Gregorius was much delighted at this meeting, and turned back with them, being all in one body, with eleven ships. As they were rowing up to Konungahella, Hakon, with his followers, was holding a Thing without the town, and saw their approach; and Sigurd of Reyr said, "Gregorius must be *fey* to be throwing himself with so few men into our hands." Gregorius landed opposite the town to wait for King Inge, for he was expected, but he did not come. King Hakon put himself in order in the town, and appointed Thorliot Skaufaskalle, who was a viking and a robber, to be captain of the men in the merchant ships that were afloat in the river; and King Hakon and Sigurd were within the town, and drew up the men on the piers, for all the townspeople had submitted to King Hakon.

3.—KING HAKON'S FLIGHT.

Gregorius rowed up the river, and let the ship drive down with the stream against Thorliot. They shot at each other a while, until Thorliot and his comrades jumped

overboard; and some of them were killed, some escaped to the land. Then Gregorius rowed to the piers, and let a gangway be cast on shore at the very feet of Hakon's men. There the man who carried his banner was slain just as he was going to step on shore. Gregorius ordered Hal, a son of Audun Halson, to take up the banner, which he did, and bore the banner up to the pier. Gregorius followed close after him, held his shield over his head, and protected him as well as himself. As soon as Gregorius came upon the pier, and Hakon's men knew him, they gave way, and made room for him on every side. Afterwards more people landed from the ships, and then Gregorius made a severe assault with his men; and Hakon's men first moved back, and then ran up into the town. Gregorius pursued them eagerly, drove them twice from the town, and killed many of them. By the report of all men, never was there so glorious an affair as this of Gregorius; for Hakon had more than 4000 men, and Gregorius not full 400. After the battle, Gregorius said to Hal Audunson, "Many men, in my opinion, are more agile in battle than ye Icelanders are, for ye are not so exercised as we Norwegians; but none, I think, are so bold under arms as ye are." King Inge came up soon after, and killed many of the men who had taken part with Hakon; made some pay heavy fines, burnt the houses of some, and some he drove out of the country, or treated otherwise very ill. Hakon fled at first up to Gautland with all his men; but the winter after (1159), he proceeded by the upper road to Throndhjem, and came there before Easter. The Throndhjem people received

him well, for they had always served under that shield. It is said that the Throndhjem people took Hakon as king, on the terms that he should have from Inge the third part of Norway as his paternal heritage. King Inge and Gregorius were in Viken, and Gregorius wanted to make an expedition against the party in the north; but it came to nothing that winter, as many dissuaded from it.

4.—FALL OF GYRD AND HAVARD.

King Hakon left Throndhjem in spring with thirty ships nearly; and some of his men sailed before the rest with seven ships, and plundered in North and South More. No man could remember that there ever before had been plundering between the two towns (Bergen and Nidaros). Jon the son of Halkel Huk collected the bondes in arms, and proceeded against them; took Kolbein Ode prisoner, killed every woman's son of them in his ship. Then they searched for the others, found them all assembled in seven ships, and fought with them; but his father Halkel not coming to his assistance as he had promised, many good bondes were killed, and Jon himself was wounded. Hakon proceeded south to Bergen with his forces; but when he came to Stiornvelta, he heard that King Inge and Gregorius had arrived a few nights before from the east at Bergen, and therefore he did not venture to steer thither. They sailed the outer course southwards past Bergen, and met three ships of King Inge's fleet, which had been outsailed on the voyage from the east. On board of them were Gyrd Amundason, King Inge's foster-brother, who was married to Gyrid a sister

of Gregorius, and also lagman Gyrd Gunhildson, and Havard Klining. King Hakon had Gyrd Amundason and Havard Klining put to death; but took lagman Gyrd southwards, and then proceeded east to Viken.

5.—OF THE CONSULTATIONS OF KING INGE.

When King Inge heard of this he sailed east after them, and they met east in the Gaut river. King Inge went up the north arm of the river, and sent out spies to get news of Hakon and his fleet; but he himself landed at Hising, and waited for his spies. Now when the spies came back they went to the king, and said that they had seen King Hakon's forces, and all his ships which lay at the stakes in the river, and Hakon's men had bound the stems of their vessels to them. They had two great East-country trading vessels, which they had laid outside of the fleet, and on both these were built high wooded stages (castles). When King Inge heard the preparations they had made, he ordered a trumpet to call a House-thing of all the men; and when the Thing was seated he asked his men for counsel, and applied particularly to Gregorius Dagson, his brother-in-law Erling Skakke, and other lendermen and ship-commanders, to whom he related the preparations of Hakon and his men.

Then Gregorius Dagson replied first, and made known his mind in the following words:—"Sometimes we and Hakon have met, and generally they had the most people; but, notwithstanding, they fell short in battle against us. Now, on the other hand, we have by far the greatest force; and it will appear probable to the men who a short time

ago lost gallant relations by them, that this will be a good occasion to get vengeance, for they have fled before us the greater part of the summer; and we have often said that if they waited for us, as appears now to be the case, we would have a brush with them. Now I will tell my opinion, which is, that I will engage them, if it be agreeable to the king's pleasure; for I think it will go now as formerly, that they must give way before us if we attack them bravely; and I shall always attack where others may think it most difficult."

The speech was received with much applause, and all declared they were ready to engage in battle against Hakon. Then they rowed with all the ships up the river, until they came in sight of each other, and then King Inge turned off from the river current under the island. Now the king addressed the lendermen again, and told them to get ready for battle. He turned himself especially to Erling Skakke, and said, what was true, that no man in the army had more understanding and knowledge in fighting battles, although some were more hot. The king then addressed himself to several of the lendermen, speaking to them by name; and ended by desiring that each man should make his attack where he thought it would be of advantage, and thereafter all would act together.

6.—ERLING'S SPEECH.

Erling Skakke replied thus to the king's speech: "It is my duty, sire, not to be silent; and I shall give my advice, since it is desired. The resolution now adopted is contrary to my judgment; for I call it foolhardy to

fight under these circumstances, although we have so many and such fine men. Supposing we make an attack on them, and row up against this river-current; then one of the three men who are in each half room must be employed in rowing only, and another must be covering with the shield the man who rows; and what have we then to fight with but one third of our men? It appears to me that they can be of little use in the battle who are sitting at their oars with their backs turned to the enemy. Give me now some time for consideration, and I promse you that before three days are over I shall fall upon some plan by which we can come into battle with advantage."

It was evident from Erling's speech that he dissuaded from an attack; but, notwithstanding, it was urged by many, who thought that Hakon would now, as before, take to the land. "And then," said they, "we cannot get hold of him; but now they have but few men, and we have their fate in our own hands."

Gregorius said but little; but thought that Erling rather dissuaded from an attack that Gregorius's advice should have no effect, than that he had any better advice to give.

7.—OF HAKON'S FLEET.

Then said King Inge to Erling, "Now we will follow thy advice, brother, with regard to the manner of attacking; but seeing how eager our counsellors are for it, we shall make the attack this day."

Erling replied, "All the boats and light vessels we have should row outside the island, and up the east arm of the river, and then down with the stream upon them, and try

if they cannot cut them loose from the piles. Then we, with the large ships, shall row from below here against them; and I cannot tell until it be tried, if those who are now so furiously warm will be much brisker at the attack than I am."

This counsel was approved by all. There was a ness stretched out between their fleet and Hakon's, so that they could not see each other. Now when Hakon and his men, who had taken counsel with each other in a meeting, saw the boat-squadron rowing down the river, some thought King Inge intended to give them battle; but many believed they did not dare, for it looked as if the attack was given up; and they, besides, were very confident, both in their preparations and men. There were many great people with Hakon: there were Sigurd of Reyr, and Simon's sons; Nikolas Skialdvarson; Eindride, a son of Jon Mornef, who was the most gallant and popular man in the Throndhjem country; and many other lendermen and warriors. Now when they saw that King Inge's men with many ships were rowing out of the river, Hakon and his men believed they were going to fly; and therefore they cut their land-ropes with which they lay fast at the piles, seized their oars, and rowed after them in pursuit. The ships ran fast down with the stream; but when they came further down the river, abreast of the ness, they saw King Inge's main strength lying quiet at the island Hising. King Inge's people saw Hakon's ships under way, and believed they were coming to attack them; and now there was great bustle and clash of arms, and they encouraged each other by a great war-

shout. Hakon with his fleet turned northwards a little to the land, where there was a turn in the bight of the river, and where there was no current. They made ready for battle, carried land-ropes to the shore, turned the stems of their ships outwards, and bound them all together. They laid the large East-country traders without the other vessels, the one above, the other below, and bound them to the long-ships. In the middle of the fleet lay the king's ship, and next to it Sigurd's; and on the other side of the king's ship lay Nikolas, and next to him Endride Jonson. All the smaller ships lay farther off, and they were all nearly loaded with weapons and stones.

8.—SIGURD OF REYR'S SPEECH.

Then Sigurd of Reyr made the following speech: "Now there is hope that the time is come which has been promised us all the summer, that we shall meet King Inge in battle. We have long prepared ourselves for this; and many of our comrades have boasted that they would never fly from or submit to King Inge and Gregorius, and now let them remember their words. But we who have sometimes got the toothache in our conflicts with them, speak less confidently; for it has happened, as all have heard, that we very often have come off without glory. But, nevertheless, it is now necessary to fight manfully, and stand to it with steadiness; for the only escape for us is in victory. Although we have somewhat fewer men than they, yet luck determines which side shall have the advantage, and God knows that the right is on our side. Inge has killed two of his brothers; and

it is obvious to all men that the mulct he intends to pay King Hakon for his father's murder is to murder him also, as well as his other relations, which will be seen this day to be his intent. King Hakon desired from the beginning no more of Norway than the third part, which his father had possessed, and which was denied him; and yet, in my opinion, King Hakon has a better right to inherit after his father's brother, King Eystein, than Inge or Simon Skalp, or the other men who killed King Eystein. Many of them who would save their souls, and yet have defiled their hands with such bloody deeds as Inge has done, must think it a presumption before God that he takes the name of king; and I wonder God suffers such monstrous wickedness as his; but it may be God's will that we shall now put him down. Let us fight then manfully, and God will give us victory; and, if we fall, will repay us with joys unspeakable for now allowing the might of the wicked to prevail over us. Go forth then in confidence, and be not afraid when the battle begins. Let each watch over his own and his comrade's safety, and God protect us all." There went a good report abroad of this speech of Sigurd, and all promised fairly, and to do their duty. King Hakon went on board of the great East-country ship, and a shield-bulwark was made around him; but his standard remained on the long-ship in which it had been before.

9.—OF KING INGE'S MEN.

Now must we tell about King Inge and his men. When they saw that King Hakon and his people were ready for battle, and the river only was between them,

they sent a light vessel to recall the rest of the fleet which had rowed away; and in the meantime the king waited for them, and arranged the troops for the attack. Then the chiefs consulted in presence of the army, and told their opinions; first, which ships should lie nearest to the enemy: and then where each should attack.

Gregorius spoke thus: "We have many and fine men; and it is my advice, King Inge, that you do not go to the assault with us, for everything is preserved if you are safe. And no man knows where an arrow may hit, even from the hands of a bad bowman: and they have prepared themselves so, that missiles and stones can be thrown from the high stages upon the merchant ships, so that there is less danger for those who are farthest from them. They have not more men than we lendermen can very well engage with. I shall lay my ship alongside their largest ship, and I expect the conflict between us will be but short; for it has often been so in our former meetings, although there has been a much greater want of men with us than now." All thought well of the advice that the king himself should not take part in the battle.

Then Erling Skakke said, "I agree also to the counsel that you, sire, should not go into the battle. It appears to me that their preparations are such, that we require all our precaution not to suffer a great defeat from them; and whole limbs are the easiest cured. In the council we held before to-day many opposed what I said, and ye said then that I did not want to fight; but now I think the business has altered its appearance, and greatly to our advantage, since they have hauled off from the piles, and now it

stands so that I do not dissuade from giving battle; for I see, what all are sensible of, how necessary it is to put an end to this robber band who have gone over the whole country with pillage and destruction, in order that people may cultivate the land in peace, and serve a king so good and just as King Inge who has long had trouble and anxiety from the haughty unquiet spirit of his relations, although he has been a shield of defence for the whole people, and has been exposed to manifold perils for the peace of the country." Erling spoke well and long, and many other chiefs also; and all to the same purpose—all urging to battle. In the meantime they waited until all the fleet should be assembled. King Inge had the ship Bækisudin; and, at the entreaty of his friends, he did not join the battle, but lay still at the island.

10.—BEGINNING OF THE BATTLE.

When the army was ready they rowed briskly against the enemy, and both sides raised a war-shout. Inge's men did not bind their ships together, but let them be loose; for they rowed right across the current, by which the large ships were much swayed. Erling Skakke laid his ship beside King Hakon's ship, and ran the stem between his and Sigurd's ship, by which the battle began. But Gregorius's ship swung upon the ground, and heeled very much over, so that at first she could not come into the battle; and when Hakon's men saw this they laid themselves against her, and attacked Gregorius's ship on all sides. Ivar, Hakon Mage's son, laid his ship so that the

stems struck together; and he got a boat-hook fastened on Gregorius, on that part of his body where the waist is smallest, and dragged him to him, by which Gregorius stumbled against the ship's rails; but the hook slipped to one side, or Gregorius would have been dragged overboard. Gregorius, however, was but little wounded, for he had on a plate coat of armour. Ivar called out to him, that he had a "thick bark." Gregorius replied, that if Ivar went on so he would "require it all, and not have too much." It was very near then that Gregorius and his men had sprung overboard; but Aslak Unge threw an anchor into their ship, and dragged them off the ground. Then Gregorius laid himself against Ivar's ship, and they fought a long while; but Gregorius's ship being both higher sided and more strongly manned, many people fell in Ivar's ship, and some jumped overboard. Ivar was so severely wounded that he could not take part in the fight. When his ship was cleared of the men, Gregorius let Ivar be carried to the shore, so that he might escape; and from that time they were constant friends.

11.—KING HAKON'S FLIGHT.

When King Inge and his men saw that Gregorius was aground, he encouraged his crew to row to his assistance. "It was," he said, "the most imprudent advice that we should remain lying here, while our friends are in battle; for we have the largest and best ship in all the fleet. But now I see that Gregorius, the man to whom I owe the most, is in need of help; so we must hasten to the

fight where it is sharpest. It is also most proper that I should be in the battle; for the victory, if we win it, will belong to me. And if I even knew beforehand that our men were not to gain the battle, yet our place is where our friends are; for I can do nothing if I lose the men who are justly called the defence of the country, who are the bravest, and have long ruled for me and my kingdom." Thereupon he ordered his banner to be set up, which was done; and they rowed across the river. Then the battle raged, and the king could not get room to attack, so close lay the ships before him. First he lay under the East-country trading ship, and from it they threw down upon his vessel spears, iron-shod stakes, and such large stones that it was impossible to hold out longer there, and he had to haul off. Now when the king's people saw that he was come they made place for him, and then he laid alongside of Eindride Jonson's ship. Now King Hakon's men abandoned the small ships, and went on board the large merchant vessels; but some of them sprang on shore. Erling Skakke and his men had a severe conflict. Erling himself was on the forecastle, and called his forecastlemen, and ordered them to board the king's ship; but they answered, this was no easy matter, for there were beams above with an iron comb on them. Then Erling himself went to the bow, and stayed there a while, until they succeeded in getting on board the king's ship; and then the ship was cleared of men on the bows, and the whole army gave way. Many sprang into the water, many fell, but the greater number got to the land. So says Einar Skulason:—

"Men fall upon the slippery deck—
Men roll off from the blood-drenched wreck;
Dead bodies float down with the stream,
And from the shores witch-ravens scream.
The cold blue river now runs red
With the warm blood of warriors dead,
And stains the waves in Karmt Sound
With the last drops of the death-wound.

"All down the stream, with unmann'd prow,
Floats many an empty long-ship now.
Ship after ship, shout after shout,
Tell that King Hakon can't hold out.
The bowmen ply their bows of elm,
The red swords flash o'er broken helm:
King Hakon's men rush to the strand,
Out of their ships, up through the land."

Einar composed a song about Gregorius Dagson, which is called the River-song. King Inge granted life and peace to Nikolas Skialdvarson when his ship was deserted, and thereupon he went into King Inge's service, and remained in it as long as the king lived. Eindride Jonson leaped on board of King Inge's ship when his own was cleared of men, and begged for his life. King Inge wished to grant it; but Havard Klining's son ran up, and gave him a mortal wound, which was much blamed; but he said Eindride had been the cause of his father's death. There was much lamentation at Eindride's death, but principally in the Throndhjem district. Many of Hakon's people fell here, but not many chiefs. Few of King Inge's people fell, but many were wounded. King Hakon fled up the country, and King Inge went north to Viken with his troops; and he, as well as Gregorius, remained in Viken all winter (1160). When King Inge's men, Bergliot and his brothers, sons of Ivar of Elda, came from the battle to Bergen, they slew Nickolas Skeg, who had been Hakon's treasurer, and then went north to Throndhjem.

King Hakon came north before Yule, and Sigurd was sometimes home at Reyr; for Gregorius, who was nearly related to Sigurd, had obtained for him life and safety

from King Inge, so that he retained all his estates. King Hakon was in the merchant-town of Nidaros in Yule; and one evening in the beginning of Yule his men fought in the room of the court, and in this affray eight men were killed, and many were wounded. The eighth day of Yule, King Hakon's man Alf Rode, son of Ottar Birting, with about eighty men, went to Elda, and came in the night unexpectedly on the people, who were very drunk, and set fire to the room; but they went out, and defended themselves bravely. There fell Bergliot, Ivar's son, and Ogmund, his brother, and many more. They had been nearly thirty altogether in number. In winter died, north in the merchant-town, Andres Simonson, King Hakon's foster-brother; and his death was much deplored. Erling Skakke and Inge's men, who were in Bergen, threatened that in winter they would proceed against Hakon and his men; but it came to nothing. Gregorius sent word from the east, from Konungahella, that if he were so near as Erling and his men, he would not sit quietly in Bergen while Hakon was killing King Inge's friends and their comrades in war north in the Throndhjem country.

12.—THE CONFLICT UPON THE PIERS.

King Inge and Gregorius left the east in spring, and came to Bergen; but as soon as Hakon and Sigurd heard that Inge had left Viken, they went there by land. When King Inge and his people came to Bergen, a quarrel arose between Haldor Brynjolfson and Bjorn Nikolason. Bjorn's house-man asked Haldor's when they met at the pier, why he looked so pale.

He replied, because he had been bled.

"I could not look so pale if I tried, at merely being bled."

"I again think," retorted the other, "that thou wouldst have borne it worse, and less manfully." And no other beginning was there for their quarrel than this. Afterwards one word followed another, till from brawling they came to fighting. It was told to Haldor Brynjolfson, who was in the house drinking, that his house-man was wounded down on the pier and he went there immediately. But Bjorn's house-men had come there before, and as Haldor thought his house-man had been badly treated, he went up to them and beat them; and it was told to Bjorn Buk that the people of Viken were beating his house-men on the pier. Then Bjorn and his house-men took their weapons, hurried down to the pier, and would avenge their men; and a bloody strife began. It was told Gregorius that his relation Haldor required assistance, and that his house-men were being cut down in the street; on which Gregorius and his men ran to the place in their armour. Now it was told Erling Skakke that his sister's son Bjorn was fighting with Gregorius and Haldor down on the piers, and that he needed help. Then he proceeded thither with a great force, and exhorted the people to stand by him; saying it would be a great disgrace, never to be wiped out, if the Viken people should trample upon them in their own native place. There fell thirteen men, of whom nine were killed on the spot, and four died of their wounds, and many were wounded. When the word came to King Inge that Gregorius and Erling were fighting down on the

piers, he hastened there, and tried to separate them; but could do nothing, so mad were they on both sides. Then Gregorius called to Inge, and told him to go away; for it was in vain to attempt coming between them, as matters now stood. He said it would be the greatest misfortune if the king mixed himself up with it; for he could not be certain that there were not people in the fray who would commit some great misdeed if they had opportunity. Then King Inge retired; and when the greatest tumult was over, Gregorius and his men went to Nikolas church, and Erling behind them, calling to each other. Then King Inge came a second time, and pacified them; and both agreed that he should mediate between them.

When King Inge and Gregorius heard that King Hakon was in Viken, they went east with many ships; but when they came King Hakon fled from them, and there was no battle. Then King Inge went to Oslo, and Gregorius was in Konungahella.

13.—MUNAN'S DEATH.

Soon after Gregorius heard that Hakon and his men were at a farm called Saurby, which lies up beside the forest. Gregorius hastened there; came in the night; and supposing that King Hakon and Sigurd would be in the largest of the houses, set fire to the buildings there. But Hakon and his men were in the smaller house, and came forth, seeing the fire, to help their people. There Munan fell, a son of Ale Uskeynd, a brother of King Sigurd Hakon's father. Gregorius and his men killed him, because he was helping those whom they were burning

within the house. Some escaped, but many were killed. Asbjorn Jalda, who had been a very great viking, escaped from the house, but was grievously wounded. A bonde met him, and he offered the man money to let him get away; but the bonde replied, he would do what he liked best; and, adding that he had often been in fear of his life for him, he slew him. King Hakon and Sigurd escaped, but many of their people were killed. Thereafter Gregorius returned home to Konungahella. Soon after King Hakon and Sigurd went to Haldor Brynjolfson's farm of Vettaland, set fire to the house, and burnt it. Haldor went out, and was cut down instantly with his house-men; and in all there were about twenty men killed. Sigrid, Haldor's wife, was a sister of Gregorius, and they allowed her to escape into the forest in her night-shift only; but they took with them Amunde, who was a son of Gyrd Amundason and of Gyrid Dag's daughter, and a sister's son of Gregorius, and who was then a boy about five years old.

14.—OF THE FALL OF GREGORIUS DAGSON.

When Gregorius heard the news he took it much to heart, and inquired carefully where they were. Gregorius set out from Konungahella late in Yule, and came to Fors the thirteenth day of Yule, where he remained a night, and heard vespers the last day of Yule, which was a Saturday, and the holy Evangel was read before him. When Gregorius and his followers saw the men of King Hakon and Sigurd, the king's force appeared to them smaller than their own. There was a river called Befia between them, where they met; and there was unsound ice

on the river, for there went a stream under the ice from it. King Hakon and his men had cut a rent in the ice, and laid snow over it, so that nobody could see it. When Gregorius came to the ice on the river the ice appeared to him unsound, he said; and he advised the people to go to the bridge, which was close by, to cross the river. The bonde-troops replied, that they did not know why he should be afraid to go across the ice to attack so few people as Hakon had, and the ice was good enough. Gregorius said it was seldom necessary to encourage him to show bravery, and it should not be so now. Then he ordered them to follow him, and not to be standing on the land while he was on the ice, and he said it was their council to go out upon the dangerous ice, but he had no wish to do so, or to be led by them. Then he ordered the banner to be advanced, and immediately went out on the ice with the men. As soon as the bondes found that the ice was unsound they turned back. Gregorius fell through the ice, but not very deep, and he told his men to take care. There were not more than twenty men with him, the others having turned back. A man of King Hakon's troop shot an arrow at Gregorius, which hit him under the throat, and thus ended his life. Gregorius fell, and ten men with him. It is the talk of all men that he had been the most gallant lenderman in Norway that any man then living could remember; and also he behaved the best towards us Icelanders of any chief since King Eystein the Elder's death. Gregorius's body was carried to Hofund, and interred at Gimsey Isle, in a nunnery which is there, of which Gregorius's sister, Baugeid, was then the abbess.

15.—KING INGE HEARS OF GREGORIUS'S FALL.

Two bailiffs went to Oslo to bring the tidings to King Inge. When they arrived they desired to speak to the king: and he asked, what news they brought.

"Gregorius Dagson's death," said they.

"How came that misfortune?" asked the king.

When they had told him how it happened, he said, "They gave advice who understood the least."

It is said he took it so much to heart that he cried like a child. When he recovered himself he said, "I wanted to go to Gregorius as soon as I heard of Haldor's murder; for I thought that Gregorius would not sit long before thinking of revenge. But the people here would think nothing so important as their Yule feasts, and nothing could move them away; and I am confident that if I had been there, he would either have proceeded more cautiously, or I and Gregorius would now have shared one lodging. Now he is gone,—the man who has been my best friend, and more than any other has kept the kingdom in my hands; and I think it will be but a short space between us. Now I make an oath to go forth against Hakon, and one of two things shall happen: I shall either come to my death, or shall walk over Hakon and his people; and such a man as Gregorius is not avenged, even if all were to pay the penalty of their lives for him."

There was a man present who replied, "Ye need not seek after them, for they intend to seek you."

Kristin, King Sigurd's daughter and King Inge's cousin, was then in Oslo. The king heard that she in-

tended going away. He sent a message to her to inquire why she wished to leave the town.

She thought it was dangerous and unsafe for a female to be there.

The king would not let her go. "For if it go well with me, as I hope, you will be well here; and if I fall, my friends may not get leave to dress my body; but you can ask permission, and it will not be denied you, and you will thereby best requite what I have done for you."

16.—OF KING INGE.

On Saint Blasius' day (February 3, 1161), in the evening, King Inge's spies brought him the news that King Hakon was coming towards the town. Then King Inge ordered the war-horns to call together all the troops up from the town; and when he drew them up he could reckon them to be nearly 4000 men. The king let the array be long, but not more than five men deep. Then some said that the king should not be himself in the battle, as they thought the risk too great; but that his brother Orm should be the leader of the army. The king replied, "I think if Gregorius were alive and here now, and I had fallen and was to be avenged, he would not lie concealed, but would be in the battle. Now, although I, on account of my ill health, am not fit for the combat as he was, yet will I show as good will as he would have had; and it is not to be thought of that I should not be in the battle."

People say that Gunhild, who was married to Simon, King Hakon's foster-brother, had a witch employed to

sit out all night and procure the victory for Hakon; and that the answer was obtained, that they should fight King Inge by night, and never by day, and then the result would be favourable. The witch who, as people say, sat out was called Thordis Skeggia; but what truth there may be in the report I know not.

Simon Skalp had gone to the town, and was gone to sleep, when the war-shouts awoke him. When the night was well advanced, King Inge's spies came to him, and told him that King Hakon and his army were coming over the ice; for the ice lay the whole way from the town to Hofud Isle.

17.—KING INGE'S SPEECH.

Thereupon King Inge went with his army out on the ice, and he drew it up in order of battle in front of the town. Simon Skalp was in that wing of the array which was towards Thrælaberg; and on the other wing, which was towards the Nunnery, was Gudrod, the king of the South Hebudes, a son of Olaf Klining, and Jon, a son of Svein Bergthor Buk. When King Hakon and his army came near to King Inge's array, both sides raised a war-shout. Gudrod and Jon gave King Hakon and his men a sign, and let them know where they were in the line; and as soon as Hakon's men in consequence turned thither, Gudrod immediately fled with 1500 men; and Jon, and a great body of men with him, ran over to King Hakon's army, and assisted them in the fight. When this news was told to King Inge, he said, "Such is the difference between my friends. Never would Gregorius have done so in his life!" There were some who advised

King Inge to get on horseback, and ride from the battle up to Raumarike; "where," said they, "you would get help enough, even this very day." The king replied, he had no inclination to do so. "I have heard you often say, and I think truly, that it was of little use to my brother, King Eystein, that he took to flight; and yet he was a man distinguished for many qualities which adorn a king. Now I, who labour under so great decrepitude, can see how bad my fate would be, if I betook myself to what proved so unfortunate for him; with so great a difference as there is between our activity, health, and strength. I was in the second year of my age when I was chosen king of Norway, and I am now twenty-five; and I think I have had misfortune and sorrow under my kingly dignity, rather than pleasure and peaceful days. I have had many battles, sometimes with more, sometimes with fewer people; and it is my greatest luck that I have never fled. God will dispose of my life, and of how long it shall be; but I shall never betake myself to flight."

18.—KING INGE'S FALL.

Now as Jon and his troop had broken the one wing of King Inge's array, many of those who were nearest to him fled, by which the whole array was dispersed, and fell into disorder. But Hakon and his men went briskly forwards; and now it was near daybreak. An assault was made against King Inge's banner, and in this conflict King Inge fell; but his brother Orm continued the battle, while many of the army fled up into the town. Twice

Orm went to the town after the king's fall to encourage the people, and both times returned, and went out again upon the ice to continue the battle. Hakon's men attacked the wing of the array which Simon Skalp led; and in that assault fell of King Inge's men his brother-in-law, Gudbrand Skafhogson. Simon Skalp and Halvard Hikre went against each other with their troops, and fought while they drew aside past Thrælaberg; and in this conflict both Simon and Halvard fell. Orm, the king's brother, gained great reputation in this battle; but he at last fled. Orm the winter before had been contracted with Ragna, a daughter of Nikolas Mase, who had been married before to King Eystein Haraldson; and the wedding was fixed for the Sunday after Saint Blasius's mass, which was on a Friday. Orm fled east to Svithjod, where his brother Magnus was then king; and their brother Ragnvald was an earl there at that time. They were the sons of Queen Ingerid and Henrik Halte, who was a son of the Danish king Svein Sveinson. The princess Kristin took care of King Inge's body, which was laid on the stone wall of Halvard's church, on the south side without the choir. He had then been king for twenty-three years (1137-1161). In this battle many fell on both sides, but principally of King Inge's men. Of King Hakon's people fell Arne Frirekson. Hakon's men took all the feast and victuals prepared for the wedding, and a great booty besides.

19.—OF KING HAKON AND QUEEN KRISTIN.

Then King Hakon took possession of the whole country, and distributed all the offices among his own friends,

both in the towns and in the country. King Hakon and his men had a meeting in Halvard's church, where they had a private conference concerning the management of the country. Kristin the princess gave the priest who kept the church keys a large sum of money to conceal one of her men in the church, so that she might know what Hakon and his counsellors intended. When she learnt what they had said, she sent a man to Bergen to her husband Erling Skakke, with the message that he should never trust Hakon or his men.

20.—OF OLAF'S MIRACLE.

It happened at the battle of Stiklestad, as before related, that King Olaf threw from him the sword called Hneiter when he received his wound. A Swedish man, who had broken his own sword, took it up, and fought with it. When this man escaped with the other fugitives he came to Svithjod, and went home to his house. From that time he kept the sword all his days, and afterwards his son, and so relation after relation; and when the sword shifted its owner, the one told to the other the name of the sword and where it came from. A long time after, in the days of Kirjalax the emperor of Constantinople, when there was a great body of Varings in the town, it happened in the summer that the emperor was on a campaign, and lay in the camp with his army. The Varings who had the guard, and watched over the emperor, lay on the open plain without the camp. They changed the watch with each other in the night, and those who had been before on watch lay down and slept;

but all completely armed. It was their custom, when they went to sleep, that each should have his helmet on his head, his shield over him, sword under the head, and the right hand on the sword-handle. One of these comrades, whose lot it was to watch the latter part of the night, found, on awakening towards morning, that his sword was gone. He looked after it, and saw it lying on the flat plain at a distance from him. He got up and took the sword, thinking that his comrades who had been on watch had taken the sword from him in a joke; but they all denied it. The same thing happened three nights. Then he wondered at it, as well as they who saw or heard of it; and people began to ask him how it could have happened. He said that his sword was called Hneiter, and had belonged to King Olaf the Saint, who had himself carried it in the battle of Stiklestad; and he also related how the sword since that time had gone from one to another. This was told to the emperor, who called the man before him to whom the sword belonged, and gave him three times as much gold as the sword was worth; and the sword itself he had laid in Saint Olaf's church, which the Varings supported, where it has been ever since over the altar. There was a lenderman of Norway while Harald Gille's sons, Eystein, Inge, and Sigurd lived, who was called Eindride Unge; and he was in Constantinople when these events took place. He told these circumstances in Norway, according to what Einar Skulason says in his song about King Olaf the Saint, in which these events are sung.

21.—OLAF'S MIRACLE IN FAVOUR OF THE VARINGS.

It happened once in the Greek country, when Kirjalax was emperor there, that he made an expedition against Blokumannaland. When he came to the Pezina plains, a heathen king came against him with an innumerable host. He brought with him many horsemen, and many large waggons, in which were large loop-holes for shooting through. When they prepared for their night quarters they drew up their waggons, one by the side of the other, without their tents, and dug a great ditch without; and all which made a defence as strong as a castle. The heathen king was blind. Now when the Greek king came, the heathens drew up their array on the plains before their waggon-fortification. The Greeks drew up their array opposite, and they rode on both sides to fight with each other; but it went on so ill and so unfortunately, that the Greeks were compelled to fly after suffering a great defeat, and the heathens gained a victory. Then the king drew up an array of Franks and Flemings, who rode against the heathens, and fought with them; but it went with them as with the others, that many were killed, and all who escaped took to flight. Then the Greek king was greatly incensed at his men-at-arms; and they replied, that he should now take his wine-bags, the Varings. The king says that he would not throw away his jewels, and allow so few men, however bold they might be, to attack so vast an army. Then Thorer Helsing, who at that time was leader of the Varings replied to the king's words, "If there was burning fire in the way, I and my people would run into it, if I knew the king's advantage

required it. Then the king replied, "Call upon your holy King Olaf for help and strength." The Varings, who were 450 men, made a vow with hand and word to build a church in Constantinople, at their own expense and with the aid of other good men, and have the church consecrated to the honour and glory of the holy King Olaf; and thereupon the Varings rushed into the plain. When the heathens saw them, they told their king that there was another troop of the Greek king's army come out upon the plain; but they were only a handful of people. The king says, "Who is that venerable man riding on a white horse at the head of the troop?" They replied, "We do not see him." There was so great a difference of numbers, that there were sixty heathens for every Christian man; but notwithstanding the Varings went boldly to the attack. As soon as they met terror and alarm seized the army of the heathens, and they instantly began to fly; but the Varings pursued, and soon killed a great number of them. When the Greeks and Franks who before had fled from the heathens saw this, they hastened to take part, and pursue the enemy with the others. Then the Varings had reached the waggon-fortification, where the greatest defeat was given to the enemy. The heathen king was taken in the flight of his people, and the Varings brought him along with them; after which the Christians took the camp of the heathens, and their waggon-fortification.

MAGNUS ERLINGSON'S SAGA.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

WITH this saga, which describes a series of conflicts, Snorre's Heimskringla ends. King Eystein died in 1177, but Magnus Erlingson continued to reign until his death in 1184. The conflicts continued until the opposition party was led to victory by King Sverre.

The only skald quoted is Thorbjorn Skakkaskald.

1.—OF MAGNUS ERLINGSON'S BEGINNING.

When Erling got certain intelligence of the determinations of Hakon and his counsellors, he sent a message to all the chiefs who he knew had been steady friends of King Inge, and also to his court-men and his retinue, who had saved themselves by flight, and also to all Gregorius's house-men, and called them together to a meeting. When they met, and conversed with each other, they resolved to keep their men together; and which resolution they confirmed by oath and hand-shake to each other. Then they considered whom they should take to be king. Erling Skakke first spoke, and inquired if it was the opinion of the chiefs and other men of power that Simon Skalp's son, the son of the daughter of King Harald Gille, should be chosen king, and Jon Halkelson be taken to lead the army; but Jon refused it. Then it was inquired if Nikolas Skialdvarson, a sister's son of King Magnus Barefoot, would place himself at the head of the army; but he

answered thus:—It was his opinion that some one should be chosen king who was of the royal race; and, for leader of the troops, some one from whom help and understanding were to be looked for; and then it would be easier to gather an army. It was now tried whether Arne would let any of his sons, King Inge's brothers, be proclaimed king. Arne replies, that Kristin's son, she was the daughter of King Sigurd the Crusader, was nearest by propinquity of descent to the crown of Norway. "And here is also a man to be his adviser, and whose duty it is to take care of him and of the kingdom; and that man is his father Erling, who is both prudent, brave, experienced in war, and an able man in governing the kingdom; he wants no capability of bringing this counsel into effect, if luck be with him." Many thought well of this advice.

Erling replied to it, "As far as I can see or hear in this meeting, the most will rather be excused from taking upon themselves such a difficult business. Now it appears to me altogether uncertain, provided we begin this work, whether he who puts himself at the head of it will gain any honour; or whether matters will go as they have done before when any one undertakes such great things,—that he loses all his property and possibly his life. But if this counsel be adopted, there may be men who will undertake to carry it through; but he who comes under such an obligation must seek, in every way, to prevent any opposition or enmity from those who are now in this council."

All gave assurance that they would enter into this confederacy with perfect fidelity. Then said Erling, "I can

say for myself that it would almost be my death to serve King Hakon; and however dangerous it may be, I will rather venture to adopt your advice, and take upon me to lead this force, if that be the will, counsel, and desire of you all, and if you will all bind yourselves to this agreement by oath."

To this they all agreed; and in this meeting it was determined to take Erling's son Magnus to be king. They afterwards held a Thing in the town; and at this Thing Magnus Erlingson, then five years old, was elected king of the whole country. All who had been servants of King Inge went into his service, and each of them retained the office and dignity he had held under King Inge (1161).

2.—KING MAGNUS GOES TO DENMARK.

Erling Skakke made himself ready to travel, fitted out ships, and had with him King Magnus, together with the household-men who were on the spot. In this expedition were the king's relatives,—Arne; Ingerid, King Inge's mother, with her two sons; besides Jon Kutiza, a son of Sigurd Stork, and Erling's house-men, as well as those who had been Gregorius's house-men; and they had in all ten ships. They went south to Denmark to King Valdemar and Buriz Heinrekson, King Inge's brother. King Valdemar was King Magnus's blood-relation; for Ingebjorg, mother of King Valdemar, and Malmfrid, mother of Kristin, King Magnus's mother, were cousins. The Danish king received them hospitably, and he and Erling had private meetings and consultations: and so much was known of their counsels, that King Valdemar

was to aid King Magnus with such help as might be required from his kingdom, to win and retain Norway. On the other hand, King Valdemar should get that domain in Norway which his ancestors Harald Gormson and Svein Forked-beard had possessed; namely, the whole of Viken as far north as Rygiarbit. This agreement was confirmed by oath and a fixed treaty. Then Erling and King Magnus made themselves ready to leave Denmark, and they sailed out of Vendilskage.

3.—BATTLE OF TUNSBERG.

King Hakon went in spring, after the Easter week, north to Throndhjem, and had with him the whole fleet that had belonged to King Inge. He held a Thing there in the merchant-town, and was chosen king of the whole country. Then he made Sigurd of Reyr an earl, and gave him an earldom, and afterwards proceeded southwards with his followers all the way to Viken. The king went to Tunsberg; but sent Earl Sigurd east to Konungahella, to defend the country with a part of the forces in case Erling should come from the south. Erling and his fleet came to Agder, and went straight north to Bergen, where they killed Arne Brigdarskalle, King Hakon's officer, and came back immediately against King Hakon. Earl Sigurd, who had not observed the journey of Erling and his followers from the south, was at that time east in the Gaut river, and King Hakon was in Tunsberg. Erling brought up at Hrossanes, and lay there some nights. In the meantime King Hakon made preparations in the town. When Erling and his fleet were coming up to the

town, they took a merchant vessel, filled it with wood and straw, and set fire to it; and the wind blowing right towards the town, drove the vessel against the piers. Erling had two cables brought on board the vessel, and made fast to two boats, and made them row along as the vessel drove. Now when the fire was come almost abreast of the town, those who were in the boats held back the vessel by the ropes, so that the town could not be set on fire; but so thick a smoke spread from it over the town, that one could not see from the piers where the king's array was. Then Erling drew the whole fleet in where the wind carried the fire, and shot at the enemy. When the townspeople saw that the fire was approaching their houses, and many were wounded by the bowmen, they resolved to send the priest Hroald, the long-winded speaker, to Erling, to beg him to spare them and the town; and they dissolved the array in favour of Hakon, as soon as Hroald told them their prayer was granted. Now when the array of townspeople had dispersed, the men on the piers were much thinned: however, some urged Hakon's men to make resistance; but Onund Simonson, who had most influence over the army, said, "I will not fight for Earl Sigurd's earldom, since he is not here himself." Then Onund fled, and was followed by all the people, and by the king himself; and they hastened up the country. King Hakon lost many men here; and these verses were made about it:—

"Onund declares he will not go
In battle 'gainst Earl Sigurd's foe,
If Earl Sigurd does not come,
But with his house-men sits at home.

King Magnus' men rush up the street,
Eager with Hakon's troop to meet;
But Hakon's war-hawks, somewhat shy,
Turn quick about, and off they fly."

Thorbjorn Skakkaskald also said:—

"The Tunsberg men would not be slow
In thy good cause to risk a blow;
And well they knew the chief could stain
The wolves' mouths on a battle-plain.
But the town champion rather fears
The sharp bright glance of levelled spears;
Their steel-clad warrior loves no fight
Where bowstring twangs, or fire flies bright."

King Hakon then took the land-road northwards to Throndhjem. When Earl Sigurd heard of this, he proceeded with all the ships he could get the seaway northwards, to meet King Hakon there.

4.—OF ERLING AND HAKON.

Erling Skakke took all the ships in Tunsberg belonging to King Hakon, and there he also took the Bækisudin which had belonged to King Inge. Then Erling proceeded, and reduced the whole of Viken in obedience to King Magnus, and also the whole country north wheresoever he appeared up to Bergen, where he remained all winter. There Erling killed Ingebjorn Sipil, King Hakon's lenderman of the north part of the Fjord district. In winter (1162) King Hakon was in Throndhjem; but in the following spring he ordered a levy, and prepared to go against Erling. He had with him Earl Sigurd, Jon Sveinson, Eindride Unge, Onund Simonson, Philip Peterson, Philip Gyrdson, Ragnvald Kunta, Sigurd Kapa, Sigurd Hiupa, Frirek Keina, Asbjorn of Forland, Thorbjorn, a son of Gunnar the treasurer, and Stradbjarne.

5.—OF ERLING'S PEOPLE.

Erling was in Bergen with a great armament, and resolved to lay a sailing prohibition on all the merchant

vessels which were going north to Nidaros; for he knew that King Hakon would soon get tidings of him, if ships were sailing between the towns. Besides, he gave out that it was better for Bergen to get the goods, even if the owners were obliged to sell them cheaper than they wished than that they should fall into the hands of enemies and thereby strengthen them. And now a great many vessels were assembled at Bergen, for many arrived every day, and none were allowed to go away. Then Erling let some of the lightest of his vessels be laid ashore, and spread the report that he would wait for Hakon, and, with the help of his friends and relations, oppose the enemy there. He then one day called a meeting of the shipmasters, and gave them and all the merchant ships and their steersmen leave to go where they pleased. When the men who had charge of the cargoes, and were all ready to sail away with their goods, some for trade, others on various business, had got leave from Erling Skakke to depart, there was a soft and favourable wind for sailing north along the coast. Before the evening all who were ready had set sail, and hastened on as fast as they could, according to the speed of their vessels, the one vying with the other. When this fleet came north to More, Hakon's fleet had arrived there before them; and he himself was there fully engaged in collecting people, and summoning to him the lendermen, and all liable to serve in the levy, without having for a long time heard any news from Bergen. Now, however, they heard, as the latest news, that Erling Skakke had laid his ships up in Bergen, and there they would find him; and also that he had a large force

with him. King Hakon sailed from thence to Veey, and sent away Earl Sigurd and Onund Simonson to gather people, and sent men also to both the More districts. After King Hakon had remained a few days at the town he sailed farther, and proceeded to the South, thinking that it would both promote his journey and enable new levies to join him sooner.

Erling Skakke had given leave on Sunday to all the merchant vessels to leave Bergen; and on Tuesday, as soon as the early mass was over, he ordered the war-horns to sound, summoned to him the men-at-arms and the townsmen, and let the ships which were laid up on shore be drawn down into the water. Then Erling held a House-Thing with his men and the people of the levy: told them his intentions; named ship commanders; and had the names called over of the men who were to be on board of the king's ship. This Thing ended with Erling's order to every man to make himself ready in his berth wherever a place was appointed him; and declared that he who remained in the town after the Bækisudin was hauled out, should be punished by loss of life or limb. Orm, the king's brother, laid his ships out in the harbour immediately that evening, and many others, and the greater number were afloat before.

6.—OF ERLING SKAKKE.

On Wednesday, before mass was sung in the town, Erling sailed from Bergen with all his fleet, consisting of twenty-one ships; and there was a fresh breeze for sailing northwards along the coast. Erling had his son

King Magnus with him, and there were many lendermen accompanied by the finest men. When Erling came north, abreast of the Fjord district, he sent a boat on shore to Jon Halkelson's farm, and took Nikolas, a son of Simon Skalp and of Maria, Harald Gille's daughter, and brought him out to the fleet, and put him on board the king's ship. On Friday, immediately after matins, they sailed to Steinavag, and King Hakon, with thirteen ships, was lying in the harbour in the neighbourhood. He himself and his men were up at play upon the island, and the lendermen were sitting on the hill, when they saw a boat rowing from the south with two men in it, who were bending back deep towards the keel, and taking hasty strokes with their oars. When they came to the shore they did not belay the boat, but both ran from it. The great men seeing this, said to each other, "These men must have some news to tell;" and got up to meet them. When they met, Onund Simonson asked, "Have ye any news of Erling Skakke, that ye are running so fast?"

They answered, as soon as they could get out the words, for they had lost their breath, "Here comes Erling against you, sailing from the south, with twenty-one ships, or thereabouts, of which many are great enough; and now ye will soon see their sails."

Then said Eindride Unge, "Too near to the nose, said the peasant, when his eye was knocked out."

They went in haste now to where the games were playing, and immediately the war-horns resounded, and with the battle-call all the people were gathered down to the ships in the greatest haste. It was just the time of day

when their meat was nearly cooked. All the men rushed to the ships, and each ran on board the vessel that was nearest to him, so that the ships were unequally manned. Some took to the oars; some raised the masts, turned the heads of the vessels to the north, and steered for Veey, where they expected much assistance from the townspeople.

7.—FALL OF KING HAKON.

Soon after they saw the sails of Erling's fleet, and both fleets came in sight of each other. Eindride Unge had a ship called Draglaun, which was a large buss-like long-ship, but which had but a small crew; for those who belonged to her had run on board of other ships, and she was therefore the hindmost of Hakon's fleet. When Eindride came abreast of the island Sek, the Bækisudin, which Erling Skakke himself commanded, came up with her; and these two ships were bound fast together. King Hakon and his followers had arrived close to Veey; but when they heard the war-horn they turned again to assist Eindride. Now they began the battle on both sides, as the vessels came up. Many of the sails lay midships across the vessels; and the ships were not made fast to each other, but they lay side by side. The conflict was not long before there came disorder in Hakon's ship; and some fell, and others sprang overboard. Hakon threw over him a grey cloak, and jumped on board another ship; but when he had been there a short time he thought he had got among his enemies; and when he looked about him he saw none of his men nor of his ships near him. Then he went into the Bækisudin to the forecastle-men,

and begged his life. They took him in their keeping, and gave him quarter. In this conflict there was a great loss of people, but principally of Hakon's men. In the Bæki-sudin fell Nikolas, Simon Skalp's son; and Erling's men are accused of having killed him themselves. Then there was a pause in the battle, and the vessels separated. It was now told to Erling that Hakon was on board of his ship; that the forecastle-men had taken him, and threatened that they would defend him with arms. Erling sent men forwards in the ship to bring the forecastle-men his orders to guard Hakon well, so that he should not get away. He at the same time let it be understood that he had no objection to giving the king life and safety, if the other chiefs were willing, and a peace could be established. All the forecastle-men gave their chief great credit and honour for these words. Then Erling ordered anew a blast of the war-horns, and that the ships should be attacked which had not lost their men; saying that they would never have such another opportunity of avenging King Inge. Thereupon they all raised a war-shout, encouraged each other, and rushed to the assault. In this tumult King Hakon received his death-wound. When his men knew he had fallen they rowed with all their might against the enemy, threw away their shields, slashed with both hands, and cared not for life. This heat and recklessness, however, proved soon a great loss to them; for Erling's men saw the unprotected parts of their bodies, and where their blows would have effect. The greater part of Hakon's men who remained fell here; and it was principally owing to the want of numbers, as they were not enough to

defend themselves. They could not get quarter, also, excepting those whom the chiefs took under their protection and bound themselves to pay ransom for. The following of Hakon's people fell: Sigurd Kapa, Sigurd Hiupa, and Ragnvald Kunta; but some ships' crews got away, rowed into the fjords, and thus saved their lives. Hakon's body was carried to Raumsdal, and buried there; but afterwards his brother, King Sverre, had the body transported north to the merchant town Nidaros, and laid in the stone wall of Christ church south of the choir.

8.—FLIGHT OF THE CHIEFS OF HAKON'S MEN.

Earl Sigurd, Eindride Unge, Onund Simonson, Frirek Keina, and other chiefs kept the troop together, left the ships in Raumsdal, and went up to the Uplands. King Magnus and his father Erling sailed with their troops north to Nidaros in Throndhjem, and subdued the country as they went along. Erling called together an Eyrathing, at which King Magnus was proclaimed king of all Norway. Erling, however, remained there but a short time; for he thought the Throndhjem people were not well affected towards him and his son. King Magnus was then called king of the whole country.

King Hakon had been a handsome man in appearance, well grown, tall and thin; but rather broad-shouldered, on which account his men called him Herdebreid. As he was young in years, his lendermen ruled for him. He was cheerful and friendly in conversation, playful and youthful in his ways, and was much liked by the people.

9.—OF KING SIGURD'S BEGINNING.

There was an Upland man called Markus of Skog, who was a relation of Earl Sigurd. Markus brought up a son of King Sigurd Mun, who was also called Sigurd. This Sigurd was chosen king (1162) by the Upland people, by the advice of Earl Sigurd and the other chiefs who had followed King Hakon. They had now a great army, and the troops were divided in two bodies; so that Markus and the king were less exposed where there was anything to do, and Earl Sigurd and his troop, along with the lendermen, were most in the way of danger. They went with their troops mostly through the Uplands, and sometimes eastwards to Viken. Erling Skakke had his son King Magnus always with him, and he had also the whole fleet and the land defence under him. He was a while in Bergen in autumn; but went from thence eastward to Viken, where he settled in Tunsberg for his winter quarters (1163), and collected in Viken all the taxes and revenues that belonged to Magnus as king; and he had many and very fine troops. As Earl Sigurd had but a small part of the country, and kept many men on foot, he soon was in want of money; and where there was no chief in the neighbourhood he had to seek money by unlawful ways,—sometimes by unfounded accusations and fines, sometimes by open robbery.

10.—EARL SIGURD'S CONDEMNATION.

At that time the realm of Norway was in great prosperity. The bondes were rich and powerful, unaccustomed to hostilities or violence, and the oppression of

roving troops; so that there was soon a great noise and scandal when they were despoiled and robbed. The peopel of Viken were very friendly to Erling and King Magnus, principally from the popularity of the late King Inge Haraldson; for the Viken people had always served under his banner. Erling kept a guard in the town, and twelve men were on watch every night. Erling had Things regularly with the bondes, at which the misdeeds of Sigurd's people were often talked over; and by the representations of Erling and his adherents, the bondes were brought unanimously to consider that it would be a great good fortune if these bands should be rooted out. Arne, the king's relation, spoke well and long on this subject, and at last severely; and required that all who were at the Thing,—men-at-arms, bondes, towns-men, and merchants,—should come to the resolution to sentence according to law Earl Sigurd and all his troop, and deliver them to Satan, both living and dead. From the animosity and hatred of the people, this was agreed to by all; and thus the unheard-of deed was adopted and confirmed by oath, as if a judgment in the case was delivered there by the Thing according to law. The priest Hroald the Long-winded, who was a very eloquent man, spoke in the case; but his speech was to the same purpose as that of others who had spoken before. Erling gave a feast at Yule in Tunsberg, and paid the wages of the men-at-arms at Candlemas.

11.—OF ERLING.

Earl Sigurd went with his best troops down to Viken, where many people were obliged to submit to his su-

perior force, and many had to pay money. He drove about thus widely higher up the country, penetrating into different districts. But there were some in his troop who desired privately to make peace with Erling; but they got back the answer, that all who asked for their lives should obtain quarter, but they only should get leave to remain in the country who had not been guilty of any great offenses against Erling. And when Sigurd's adherents heard that they would not get leave to remain in the country, they held together in one body; for there were many among them who knew for certain that Erling would look upon them as guilty of offences against him. Philip Gyrdson made terms with Erling, got his property back, and went home to his farm; but soon after Sigurd's men came there, and killed him. They committed many crimes against each other, and many men were slain in their mutual persecution; but here what was committed by the chiefs only is written down.

12.—ERLING GETS NEWS OF EARL SIGURD.

It was in the beginning of Lent that news came to Erling that Earl Sigurd intended to come upon him; and news of him came here and there, sometimes nearer, sometimes farther off. Erling sent out spies in all quarters around to discover where they were. Every evening he assembled all the men-at-arms by the war-horn out of the town; and for a long time in the winter they lay under arms all night, ready to be drawn up in array. At last Erling got intelligence that Sigurd and his followers were not far distant, up at the farm Re. Erling then began his

expedition out of the town, and took with him all the towns-people who were able to carry arms and had arms, and likewise all the merchants; and left only twelve men behind to keep watch in the town. Erling went out of the town on Thursday afternoon, in the second week of Lent (February 19); and every man had two days' provisions with him. They marched by night, and it was late before they got out of the town with the men. Two men were with each shield and each horse; and the people, when mustered, were about 1300 men. When they met their spies, they were informed that Sigurd was at Re, in a house called Rafnnes, and had 500 men. Then Erling called together his people; told them the news he had received, and all were eager to hasten their march, fall on them in the houses, or engage them by night.

Erling replied to them thus: "It is probable that we and Earl Sigurd shall soon meet. There are also many men in this band whose handy-work remains in our memories; such as cutting down King Inge, and so many more of our friends, that it would take long to reckon them up. These deeds they did by the power of Satan, by witchcraft, and by villainy; for it stands in our laws and country rights, that however highly a man may have been guilty, it shall be called villainy and cowardly murder to kill him in the night. This band has had its luck hitherto by following the counsel of men acquainted with witchcraft and fighting by night, and not in the light of day; and by this proceeding have they been victorious hitherto over the chiefs whose heads they have laid low on the earth. Now we have often seen, and proved, how

unsuitable and improper it is to go into battle in the night-time; therefore let us rather have before our eyes the example of chiefs better known to us, and who deserve better to be imitated, and fight by open day in regular battle array, and not steal upon sleeping men in the night. We have people enough against them, so few as they are. Let us, therefore, wait for day and daylight, and keep together in our array in case they attack us."

Thereafter the whole army sat down. Some opened up bundles of hay, and made a bed of it for themselves; some sat upon their shields, and thus waited the day-dawn. The weather was raw, and there was a wet snow-drift.

13.—OF EARL SIGURD'S BATTLE ARRAY.

Earl Sigurd got the first intelligence of Erling's army, when it was already near to the house. His men got up, and armed themselves; but not knowing how many men Erling had with him, some were inclined to fly, but the most determined to stand. Earl Sigurd was a man of understanding, and could talk well, but certainly was not considered brave enough to take a strong resolution; and indeed the earl showed a great inclination to fly, for which he got many stinging words from his men-at-arms. As day dawned, they began on both sides to draw up their battle array. Earl Sigurd placed his men on the edge of a ridge between the river and the house, at a place at which a little stream runs into the river. Erling and his people placed their array on the other side of the river; but at the back of his array were men on horse-back well armed, who had the king with them. When

Earl Sigurd's men saw that there was so great a want of men on their side, they held a council, and were for taking to the forest. But Earl Sigurd said, "Ye alleged that I had no courage, but it will now be proved; and let each of you take care not to fail, or fly, before I do so. We have a good battle-field. Let them cross the bridge; but as soon as the banner comes over it let us then rush down the hill upon them, and none desert his neighbour."

Earl Sigurd had on a red-brown kirtle, and a red cloak, of which the corners were tied and turned back; shoes on his feet; and a shield and sword called Bastard. The earl said, "God knows that I would rather get at Erling Skakke with a stroke of Bastard, than receive much gold."

14.—EARL SIGURD'S FALL.

Erling Skakke's army wished to go on to the bridge; but Erling told them to go up along the river, which was small, and not difficult to cross, as its banks were flat; and they did so. Earl Sigurd's array proceeded up along the ridge right opposite to them; but as the ridge ended, and the ground was good and level over the river, Erling told his men to sing a Paternoster, and beg God to give them the victory who best deserved it. Then they all sang aloud "Kyrie Eleison," and struck with their weapons on their shields. But with this singing 300 men of Erling's people slipped away and fled. Then Erling and his people went across the river, and the earl's men raised the war-shout; but there was no assault from the ridge down upon Erling's array, but the battle began upon the hill itself. They first used spears then edge

weapons; and the earl's banner soon retired so far back, that Erling and his men scaled the ridge. The battle lasted but a short time before the earl's men fled to the forest, which they had close behind them. This was told Earl Sigurd, and his men bade him fly; but he replied, "Let us on while we can." And his men went bravely on, and cut down on all sides. In this tumult fell Earl Sigurd and Jon Sveinson, and nearly sixty men. Erling lost few men, and pursued the fugitives to the forest. There Erling halted his troops, and turned back. He came just as the king's slaves were about stripping the clothes off Earl Sigurd, who was not quite lifeless. He had put his sword in the sheath, and it lay by his side. Erling took it, struck the slaves with it, and drove them away. Then Erling, with his troops, returned, and sat down in Tunsberg. Seven days after Earl Sigurd's fall Erling's men took Eindride Unge prisoner, and killed him, with all his ship's crew.

15.—MARKUS OF SKOG, AND SIGURD SIGURDSON.

Markus of Skog, and King Sigurd, his foster-son, rode down to Viken towards spring, and there got a ship; but when Erling heard it he went eastwards against them, and they met at Konungahella. Markus fled with his followers to the island Hising; and there the country-people of Hising came down in swarms, and placed themselves in Markus's and Sigurd's array. Erling and his men rowed to the shore; but Markus's men shot at them. Then Erling said to his people, "Let us take their ships, but not go up to fight with a land force. The Hisingers

are a bad set to quarrel with,—hard, and without understanding. They will keep this troop but a little while among them, for Hising is but a small spot." This was done: they took the ships, and brought them over to Konungahella. Markus and his men went up to the forest district, from which they intended to make assaults, and they had spies out on both sides. Erling had many men-at-arms with him, whom he brought from other districts, and they made attacks on each other in turn.

16.—BEGINNING OF ARCHBISHOP EYSTEIN.

Eystein, a son of Erlend Himalde, was selected to be archbishop, after Archbishop Jon's death; and he was consecrated the same year King Inge was killed. Now when Archbishop Eystein came to his see, he made himself beloved by all the country, as an excellent active man of high birth. The Throndhjem people, in particular, received him with pleasure; for most of the great people in the Throndhjem district were connected with the archbishop by relationship or other connection, and all were his friends. The archbishop brought forward a request to the bondes in a speech, in which he set forth the great want of money for the see, and also how much greater improvement of the revenues would be necessary to maintain it suitably, as it was now of much more importance than formerly when the bishop's see was first established. He requested of the bondes that they should give him, for determining law-suits, an ore of silver value, instead of what they had before paid, which was an ore of judgment money, of that kind which was paid to the king in judg-

ing cases; and the difference between the two kinds of ore was, that the ore he desired was a half greater than the other. By help of the archbishop's relations and friends, and his own activity, this was carried; and it was fixed by law in all the Throndhjem district, and in all the districts belonging to his archbishopric.

17.—OF MARKUS AND KING SIGURD.

When Sigurd and Markus lost their ships in the Gaut river, and saw they could get no hold on Erling, they went to the Uplands, and proceeded by land north to Throndhjem. Sigurd was received there joyfully, and chosen king at an Eyra-thing; and many gallant men, with their sons, attached themselves to his party. They fitted out ships, rigged them for a voyage, and proceeded when summer came southwards to More, and took up all the royal revenues wheresoever they came. At this time the following lendermen were appointed in Bergen for the defence of the country:—Nikolas Sigurdson, Nokve Palson, and several military leaders; as Thorolf Dryl, Thorbjorn Gjaldkere, and many others. As Markus and Sigurd sailed south, they heard that Erling's men were numerous in Bergen; and therefore they sailed outside the coast-rocks, and southwards past Bergen. It was generally remarked, that Markus's men always got a fair wind, wherever they wished to sail to.

18.—MARKUS AND KING SIGURD KILLED.

As soon as Erling Skakke heard that Sigurd and Markus had sailed southwards, he hastened to Viken, and

drew together an armed force; and he soon had a great many men, and many stout ships. But when he came farther in Viken, he met with a strong contrary wind, which kept him there in port the whole summer. Now when Sigurd and Markus came east to Lister, they heard that Erling had a great force in Viken; so they turned to the north again. But when they reached Hordaland, with the intention of sailing to Bergen, and came opposite the town, Nikolas and his men rowed out against them, with more men and larger ships than they had. Sigurd and Markus saw no other way of escaping but to row away southwards. Some of them went out to sea, others got south to the sound, and some got into the Fjords. Markus, and some people with him, sprang upon an isle called Skarpa. Nikolas and his men took their ships, gave Jon Halkelson and a few others quarter, but killed the most of them they could get hold of. Some days after Eindride Heidafylja found Sigurd and Markus, and they were brought to Bergen. Sigurd was beheaded outside of Grafdal, and Markus and another man were hanged at Hvarfsnes. This took place on Michaelmas day (September 29, 1163), and the band which had followed them was dispersed.

19.—ERLING AND THE PEOPLE OF HISING ISLE.

Frirek Keina and Bjarne the Bad, Onund Simonson and Ornolf Skorpa had rowed out to sea with some ships, and sailed outside along the land to the east. Wheresoever they came to the land they plundered, and killed Erling's friends. Now when Erling heard that Sigurd

and Markus were killed, he gave leave to the lendermen and people of the levy to return home; but he himself, with his men, set his course eastward across the Folden fjord, for he heard of Markus's men there. Erling sailed to Konungahella, where he remained the autumn; and in the first week of winter Erling went out to the island Hising with his men, and called the bondes to a Thing. When the Hising people came to the Thing, Erling laid his law-suit against them for having joined the bands of Sigurd and Markus, and having raised men against him. Assur was the name of one of the greatest of the bondes on the island, and he answered Erling on account of the others. The Thing was long assembled; but at the close the bondes gave the case into Erling's own power, and he appointed a meeting in the town within one week, and named fifteen bondes who should appear there. When they came, he condemned them to pay a penalty of 300 head of cattle; and the bondes returned home ill pleased at this sentence. Soon after the Gaut river was frozen, and Erling's ships were fast in the ice; and the bondes kept back the mulct, and lay assembled for some time. Erling made a Yule feast in the town; but the Hising people had joint-feasts with each other, and kept under arms during Yule. The night after the fifth day of Yule Erling went up to Hising, surrounded Assur's house, and burnt him in it. He killed one hundred men in all, burnt three houses, and then returned to Konungahella. The bondes came then, according to agreement, to pay the mulct.

20.—DEATH OF FRIREK KEINA AND BJARNE.

Erling Skakke made ready to sail in spring as soon as he could get his ships afloat for ice, and sailed from Konungahella; for he heard that those who had formerly been Markus's friends were marauding in the north of Viken. Erling sent out spies to learn their doings, searched for them, and found them lying in a harbour. Onund Simonson and Ornolf Skorpa escaped, but Frirek Keina and Bjarne the Bad were taken, and many of their followers were killed. Erling had Frirek bound to an anchor and thrown overboard; and for that deed Erling was much detested in the Throndhjem country, for the most powerful men there were relatives of Frirek. Erling ordered Bjarne the Bad to be hanged; and he uttered, according to his custom, many dreadful imprecations during his execution. Thorbjorn Skakkaskald tells of this business:—

"East of the Fjord beyond the land,
Unnoticed by the pirate band,
Erling stole on them ere they knew,
And seized and killed all Keina's crew.

Keina, fast to an anchor bound,
Was thrown into the deep-blue Sound;
And Bjarne swung high on gallows-tree,
A sight all good men loved to see."

Onund and Ornolf, with the band that had escaped, fled to Denmark; but were sometimes in Gautland, or in Viken.

21.—CONFERENCE BETWEEN ERLING AND EYSTEIN.

Erling Skakke sailed after this to Tunsberg, and remained there very long in spring (1164); but when summer came he proceeded north to Bergen, where at that time a great many people were assembled. There was the

legate from Rome, Stephanus; the Archbishop Eystein, and other bishops of the country. There was also Bishop Brand, who was consecrated bishop of Iceland, and Jon Loptson, a daughter's son of King Magnus Barefoot; and on this occasion King Magnus and Jon's other relations acknowledged the relationship with him.

Archbishop Eystein and Erling Skakke often conversed together in private; and, among other things, Erling asked one day, "Is it true, sir, what people tell me,—that you have raised the value of the ore upon the people north in Throndhjem, in the law cases in which money-fees are paid you?"

"It is so," said the archbishop, "that the bondes have allowed me an advance on the ore of law casualties; but they did it willingly, and without any kind of compulsion, and have thereby added to their honour for God and the income of the bishopric."

Erling replies, "Is this according to the law of the holy Olaf? or have you gone to work more arbitrarily in this than is written down in the lawbook?"

The archbishop replies, "King Olaf the Holy fixed the laws, to which he received the consent and affirmative of the people; but it will not be found in his laws that it is forbidden to increase God's right."

Erling: "If you augment your right, you must assist us to augment as much the king's right."

The archbishop: "Thou hast already augmented enough thy son's power and dominion; and if I have exceeded the law in taking an increase of the ore from the Throndhjem people, it is, I think, a much greater breach

of the law that one is king over the country who is not a king's son, and which has neither any support in the law, nor in any precedent here in the country."

Erling: "When Magnus was chosen king, it was done with your knowledge and consent, and also of all the other bishops here in the country."

Archbishop: "You promised then, Erling, that provided we gave our consent to electing Magnus king, you would, on all occasions, and with all your power, strengthen God's rights."

Erling: "I may well admit that I have promised to preserve and strengthen God's commands and the laws of the land with all my power, and with the king's strength; and now I consider it to be much more advisable, instead of accusing each other of a breach of our promises, to hold firmly by the agreement entered into between us. Do you strengthen Magnus in his dominion, according to what you have promised; and I will, on my part, strengthen your power in all that can be of advantage or honour."

The conversation now took a more friendly turn; and Erling said, "Although Magnus was not chosen king according to what has been the old custom of this country, yet can you with your power give him consecration as king, as God's law prescribes, by anointing the king to sovereignty; and although I be neither a king, nor of kingly race, yet most of the kings, within my recollection, have not known the laws or the constitution of the country so well as I do. Besides, the mother of King Magnus is the daughter of a king and queen born in lawful wedlock,

and Magnus is son of a queen and a lawfully married wife. Now if you will give him royal consecration, no man can take royalty from him. William Bastard was not a king's son; but he was consecrated and crowned king of England, and the royalty in England has ever since remained with his race, and all have been crowned. Svein Ulfson was not a king's son in Denmark, and still he was a crowned king, and his sons likewise, and all his descendants have been crowned kings. Now we have here in Norway an archiepiscopal seat, to the glory and honour of the country; let us also have a crowned king, as well as the Danes and Englishmen."

Erling and the archbishop afterwards talked often of this matter, and they were quite agreed. Then the archbishop brought the business before the legate, and got him easily persuaded to give his consent. Thereafter the archbishop called together the bishops, and other learned men, and explained the subject to them. They all replied in the same terms, that they would follow the counsels of the archbishop, and all were eager to promote the consecration as soon as the archbishop pleased.

22.—KING MAGNUS'S CONSECRATION.

Erling Skakke then had a great feast prepared in the king's house. The large hall was covered with costly cloth and tapestry, and adorned with great expense. The court-men and all the attendants were there entertained, and there were numerous guests, and many chiefs. Then King Magnus received the royal consecration from the Archbishop Eystein; and at the consecration there were

five other bishops and the legate, besides a number of other clergy. Erling Skakke, and with him twelve other lendermen, administered to the king the oath of the law; and the day of the consecration the king and Erling had the legate, the archbishop, and all the other bishops as guests; and the feast was exceedingly magnificent, and the father and son distributed many great presents. King Magnus was then eight years of age, and had been king for three years.

23.—KING VALDEMAR'S EMBASSY.

When the Danish king Valdemar heard the news from Norway that Magnus was become king of the whole country, and all the other parties in the country were rooted out, he sent his men with a letter to King Magnus and Erling, and reminded them of the agreement which Erling had entered into, under oath, with King Valdemar, of which we have spoken before; namely, that Viken from the east to Rygiarbit should be ceded to King Valdemar, if Magnus became the sole king of Norway. When the ambassadors came forward and showed Erling the letter of the Danish king, and he heard the Danish king's demand upon Norway, he laid it before the other chiefs by whose counsels he usually covered his acts. All, as one man, replied that the Danes should never hold the slightest portion of Norway; for never had times been worse in the land than when the Danes had power in it. The ambassadors of the Danish king were urgent with Erling for an answer, and desired to have it decided; but Erling begged them to proceed with him east to Viken,

and said he would give his final answer when he had met with the men of most understanding and influence in Viken.

24.—ERLING AND THE PEOPLE OF VIKEN.

Erling Skakke proceeded in autumn to Viken, and stayed in Tunsberg, from whence he sent people to Sarpsborg to summon a Thing[1] of four districts; and then Erling went there with his people.

When the Thing was seated Erling made a speech in which he explained the resolutions which had been settled upon between him and the Danish king, the first time he collected troops against his enemies. "I will," said Erling, "keep faithfully the agreement which we then entered into with the king, if it be your will and consent, bondes, rather to serve the Danish king than the king who is now consecrated and crowned king of this country."

The bondes replied thus to Erling's speech: "Never will we become the Danish king's men, as long as one of us Viken men is in life." And the whole assembly, with shouts and cries, called on Erling to keep the oath he had taken to defend his son's dominions, "should we even all follow thee to battle." And so the Thing was dissolved.

The ambassadors of the Danish king then returned home, and told the issue of their errand. The Danes abused Erling, and all Northmen, and declared that evil only proceeded from them; and the report was spread, that in Spring the Danish king would send out an army

[1]This reference to a Thing of the people in the affairs of the country is a striking example of the right of the Things being recognised, in theory at least, as fully as the right of our parliaments in later times.—L.

and lay waste Norway. Erling returned in autumn north to Bergen, stayed there all winter, and gave their pay to his people.

25.—LETTERS OF THE THRONDHJEM PEOPLE.

The same winter (1165) some Danish people came by land through the Uplands, saying they were to go, as was then the general practice, to the holy King Olaf's festival. But when they came to the Throndhjem country, they went to many men of influence, and told their business; which was, that the Danish king had sent them to desire their friendship, and consent, if he came to the country, promising them both power and money. With this verbal message came also the Danish king's letter and seal, and a message to the Throndhjem people that they should send back their letters and seals to him. They did so, and the most of them received well the Danish king's message; whereupon the messengers returned back towards Lent. Erling was in Bergen; and towards spring Erling's friends told him the loose reports they had heard by some merchant vessels that had arrived from Throndhjem, that the Throndhjem people were in hostility openly against him; and had declared that if Erling came to Throndhjem, he should never pass Agdanes in life. Erling said this was mere folly and idle talk. Erling now made it known that he would go to Unarheim to the Gangdag-thing; and ordered a cutter of twenty rowing benches to be fitted out, a boat of fifteen benches, and a provision-ship. When the vessels were ready, there came a strong southerly gale. On the Thursday of the Ascension week, Erling

called his people by sound of trumpet to their departure; but the men were loath to leave the town, and were ill inclined to row against the wind. Erling brought his vessels to Biskupshafn. "Well," said Erling, "since ye are so unwilling to row against the wind, raise the mast, hoist the sails, and let the ship go north." They did so, and sailed northwards both day and night. On Wednesday, in the evening, they sailed in past Agdanes, where they found a fleet assembled of many merchant vessels, rowing craft, and boats, all going towards the town to the celebration of the festival,—some before them, some behind them; so that the townspeople paid no attention to the long-ships coming.

26.—ERLING AND THE PEOPLE OF THRONDHJEM.

Erling came to the town just as vespers was being sung in Christ church. He and his men ran into the town, to where it was told them that the lenderman, Alf Rode, a son of Ottar Birting, was still sitting at table, and drinking with his men. Erling fell upon them; and Alf was killed, with almost all his men. Few other men were killed; for they had almost all gone to church, as this was the night before Christ's Ascension-day. In the morning early, Erling called all the people by sound of trumpet to a Thing out upon Evrar. At the Thing Erling laid a charge against the Throndhjem people, accusing them of intending to betray the country, and take it from the king; and named Bard Standale, Pal Andreason, and Razabard, who then presided over the town's affairs, and many others. They, in their defence, denied the accusa-

tion; but Erling's writer stood up, produced many letters with seals, and asked if they acknowledged their seals which they had sent to the Danish king; and thereupon the letters were read. There was also a Danish man with Erling who had gone with the letters in winter, and whom Erling for that purpose had taken into his service. He told to these men the very words which each of them had used. "And you, Razabard, spoke, striking your breast; and the very words you used were, 'Out of this breast are all these counsels produced.'" Bard replied, "I was wrong in the head, sirs, when I spoke so." There was now nothing to be done but to submit the case entirely to the sentence Erling might give upon it. He took great sums of money from many as fines, and condemned all those who had been killed as lawless, and their deeds as lawless; making their deaths thereby not subject to mulct. Then Erling returned south to Bergen.

27.—KING VALDEMAR'S EXPEDITION TO NORWAY.

The Danish king Valdemar assembled in spring (1165) a great army, and proceeded with it north to Viken. As soon as he reached the dominions of the king of Norway, the bondes assembled in a great multitude. The king advanced peacefully; but when they came to the mainland, the people shot at them even when there were only two or three together, from which the ill-will of the country people towards them was evident. When they came to Tunsberg, King Valdemar summoned a Hauga-thing; but nobody attended it from the country parts. Then Valdemar spoke thus to his troops: "It is evident that

all the country-people are against us; and now we have two things to choose: the one to go through the country, sword in hand, sparing neither man nor beast; the other is to go back without effecting our object. And it is more my inclination to go with the army to the East against the heathens, of whom we have enough before us in the East country, than to kill Christian people here, although they have well deserved it." All the others had a greater desire for a foray; but the king ruled, and they all returned back to Denmark without effecting their purpose. They pillaged, however, all around in the distant islands, or where the king was not in the neighbourhood. They then returned south to Denmark without doing anything.

28.—ERLING'S EXPEDITION TO JUTLAND.

As soon as Erling heard that a Danish force had come to Viken, he ordered a levy through all the land, both of men and ships, so that there was a great assemblage of men in arms; and with this force he proceeded eastward along the coast. But when he came to Lidandisnes, he heard that the Danish army had returned south to Denmark, after plundering all around them in Viken. Then Erling gave all the people of the levy permission to return home; but he himself and some lendermen, with many vessels, sailed to Jutland after the Danes. When they came to a place called Dyrsa, the Danes who had returned from the expedition lay there with many ships. Erling gave them battle, and there was a fight, in which the Danes soon fled with the loss of many people; and Erling and his men plundered the ships and the town, and made

a great booty, with which they returned to Norway. Thereafter, for a time, there was hostility between Norway and Denmark.

29.—ERLING'S EXPEDITION TO DENMARK.

The princess Kristin went south in autumn (1165) to Denmark, to visit her relation King Valdemar, who was her cousin. The king received her kindly, and gave her fiefs in his kingdom, so that she could support her household well. She often conversed with the king, who was remarkably kind towards her. In the spring following (1166) Kristin sent to Erling, and begged him to pay a visit to the Danish king, and enter into a peace with him. In summer Erling was in Viken, where he fitted out a long-ship, manned it with his finest lads, and sailed (a single ship) over to Jutland. When he heard that the Danish king Valdemar was in Randaros, Erling sailed thither, and came to the town just as the king sat at the dinner-table, and most of the people were taking their meal. When his people had made themselves ready according to Erling's orders, set up the ship-tents, and made fast the ship, Erling landed with twelve men, all in armour, with hats over their helmets, and swords under their cloaks. They went to the king's lodging, where the doors stood open, and the dishes were being carried in. Erling and his people went in immediately, and drew up in front of the high-seat. Erling said, "Peace and safe conduct we desire, king, both here and to return home."

The king looked at him, and said, "Art thou here, Erling?"

He replies, "Here is Erling; and tell us, at once, if we shall have peace and safe conduct."

There were eighty of the king's men in the room, but all unarmed. The king replies, "Peace ye shall have, Erling, according to thy desire; for I will not use force or villainy against a man who comes to visit me."

Erling then kissed the king's hand, went out, and down to his ship. Erling stayed at Randaros some time with the king, and they talked about terms of peace between them and between the countries. They agreed that Erling should remain as hostage with the Danish king; and that Asbjorn Snara, Bishop Absalon's brother, should go to Norway as hostage on the other part.

30.—KING VALDEMAR AND ERLING.

In a conference which King Valdemar and Erling once had together, Erling said, "Sire, it appears to me likely that it might lead to a peace between the countries if you got that part of Norway which was promised you in our agreement; but if it should be so, what chief would you place over it? Would he be a Dane?"

"No," replied the king; "no Danish chief would go to Norway, where he would have to manage an obstinate hard people, when he has it so easy here with me."

Erling: "It was on that very consideration that I came here; for I would not on any account in the world deprive myself of the advantage of your friendship. In days of old other men, Hakon Ivarson and Fin Arnason, came also from Norway to Denmark, and your predecessor, King Svein, made them both earls. Now I am not

a man of less power in Norway than they were then, and my influence is not less than theirs; and the king gave them the province of Halland to rule over, which he himself had and owned before. Now it appears to me, sire, that you, if I become your man and vassal, can allow me to hold of you the fief which my son Magnus will not deny me, by which I will be bound in duty, and ready, to undertake all the service belonging to that title."

Erling spoke such things, and much more in the same strain, until it came at last to this, that Erling became Valdemar's man and vassal; and the king led Erling to the earl's seat one day, and gave him the title of earl, and Viken as a fief under his rule. Earl Erling went thereafter to Norway, and was earl afterwards as long as he lived; and also the peace with the Danish king was afterwards always preserved. Earl Erling had four sons by his concubines. The one was called Hreidar, the next Ogmund; and these by two different mothers: the third was called Fin; the fourth Sigurd: these were younger, and their mother was Asa the Fair. The princess Kristin and Earl Erling had a daughter called Ragnhild, who was married to Jon Thorbergson of Randaberg. Kristin went away from the country with a man called Grim Rusle; and they went to Constantinople, where they were for a time, and had some children.

31.—BEGINNING OF OLAF.

Olaf, a son of Gudbrand Skafhaug, and Maria, a daughter of King Eystein Magnuson, were brought up in the house of Sigurd Agnhot in the Uplands. While Earl

Erling was in Denmark (1166), Olaf and his foster-father gathered a troop together, and many Upland people joined them; and Olaf was chosen king by them. They went with their bands through the Uplands, and sometimes down to Viken, and sometimes east to the forest settlements; but never came on board of ships. Now when Earl Erling got news of this troop, he hastened to Viken with his forces; and was there in summer in his ships, and in Oslo in autumn (1167) and kept Yule there. He had spies up the country after this troop, and went himself, along with Orm, the King-brother, up the country to follow them. Now when they came to a lake called . . . . . [1]they took all the vessels that were upon the lake.

32.—OF ERLING.

The priest who performed divine service at a place called Rydiokul, close by the lake, invited the earl to a feast at Candlemas. The earl promised to come; and thinking it would be good to hear mass there, he rowed with his attendants over the lake the night before Candlemas day. But the priest had another plan on hand. He sent men to bring Olaf news of Earl Erling's arrival. The priest gave Erling strong drink in the evening, and let him have an excessive quantity of it. When the earl wished to lie down and sleep, the beds were made ready in the drinking-room; but when they had slept a short time the earl awoke, and asked if it was not the hour for matins. The priest replied, that only a small part of the night was gone, and told him to sleep in peace. The earl replied, "I dream

[1]The name of the lake not given.

of many things to-night, and I sleep ill." He slumbered again, but awoke soon, and told the priest to get up and sing mass. The priest told the earl to sleep, and said it was but midnight. Then the earl again lay down, slept a little while, and, springing out of bed, ordered his men to put on their clothes. They did so; took their weapons, went to the church, and laid their arms outside while the priest was singing matins.

33.—BATTLE AT RYDIOKUL.

As Olaf got the message in the evening, they travelled in the night six miles, which people considered an extraordinarily long march. They arrived at Rydiokul while the priest was still singing mass, and it was pitch-dark. Olaf and his men went into the room, raised a war-shout, and killed some of the earl's men who had not gone to the early mass. Now when Erling and his men heard the war-shout, they ran to their weapons, and hastened down to their ships. Olaf and his men met them at a fence, at which there was a sharp conflict. Erling and his men retreated along the fence, which protected them. Erling had far fewer men, and many of them had fallen, and still more were wounded. What helped Earl Erling and his men the most was, that Olaf's men could not distinguish them, it was so dark; and the earl's men were always drawing down to their ships. Are Thorgeirson, father of Bishop Gudmund fell there, and many other of Erling's court-men. Erling himself was wounded in the left side; but some say he did it himself in drawing his sword. Orm the King-brother was also severely wounded; and with

great difficulty they escaped to their ships, and instantly pushed off from land. It was generally considered as a most unlucky meeting for Olaf's people, as Earl Erling was in a manner sold into their hands, if they had proceeded with common prudence. He was afterwards called Olaf the Unlucky; but others called his people Hat-lads. They went with their bands through the Uplands as before. Erling again went down to Viken to his ships, and remained there all summer. Olaf was in the Uplands, and sometimes east in the forest districts, where he and his troop remained all the next winter (1168).

34.—BATTLE AT STANGAR.

The following spring the Hat-lads went down to Viken, and raised the king's taxes all around, and remained there long in summer. When Earl Erling heard this, he hastened with his troops to meet them in Viken, and fell in with them east of the Fjord, at a place called Stangar; where they had a great battle, in which Erling was victorious. Sigurd Agnhot, and many others of Olaf's men, fell there; but Olaf escaped by flight, went south to Denmark, and was all winter (1169) in Alaborg in Jutland. The following spring Olaf fell into an illness which ended in death, and he was buried in the Maria church; and the Danes call him a saint.

35.—HARALD'S DEATH.

King Magnus had a lenderman called Nikolas Kufung, who was a son of Pal Skaptason. He took Harald prisoner, who called himself a son of King Sigurd Haraldson

and the princess Kristin, and a brother of King Magnus by the mother's side. Nikolas brought Harald to Bergen, and delivered him into Earl Erling's hands. It was Erling's custom when his enemies came before him, that he either said nothing to them, or very little, and that in all gentleness, when he had determined to put them to death; or rose with furious words against them, when he intended to spare their lives. Erling spoke but little to Harald, and many, therefore, suspected his intentions; and some begged King Magnus to put in a good word for Harald with the earl: and the king did so. The earl replies, "Thy friends advise thee badly. Thou wouldst govern this kingdom but a short time in peace and safety, if thou wert to follow the counsels of the heart only." Earl Erling ordered Harald to be taken to Nordnes, where he was beheaded.

36.—EYSTEIN EYSTEINSON AND THE BIRKEBEINS.

There was a man called Eystein, who gave himself out for a son of King Eystein Haraldson. He was at this time young, and not full grown. It is told of him that he one summer appeared in Svithjod, and went to Earl Birger Brosa, who was then married to Brigida, Eystein's aunt, a daughter of King Harald Gille. Eystein explained his business to them, and asked their assistance. Both Earl Birger and his wife listened to him in a friendly way, and promised him their confidence, and he stayed with them a while. Earl Birger gave him some assistance of men, and a good sum for travelling expenses; and both promised him their friendship on his taking leave.

Thereafter Eystein proceeded north into Norway (1174), and when he came down to Viken people flocked to him in crowds; and Eystein was there proclaimed king, and he remained in Viken in winter. As they were very poor in money, they robbed all around, wherefore the lendermen and bondes raised men against them; and being thus overpowered by numbers, they fled away to the forests and deserted hill grounds, where they lived for a long time. Their clothes being worn out, they wound the bark of the birch-tree about their legs, and thus were called by the bondes Birkebeins. They often rushed down upon the settled districts, pushed on here or there, and made an assault where they did not find many people to oppose them. They had several battles with the bondes with various success; and the Birkebeins held three battles in regular array, and gained the victory in them all. At Krokaskog they had nearly made an unlucky expedition, for a great number of bondes and men-at-arms were assembled there against them; but the Birkebeins felled brushwood across the roads, and retired into the forest. They were two years (1175-1176) in Viken before they showed themselves in the northern parts of the country.

37.—BIRKEBEINS, KING EYSTEIN, AND SKAKKE.

Magnus had been king for thirteen years when the Birkebeins first made their appearance. They got themselves ships in the third summer (1176), with which they sailed along the coast gathering goods and men. They were first in Viken; but when summer advanced they proceeded northwards, and so rapidly that no news preceded

them until they came to Throndhjem. The Birkebeins' troop consisted principally of hill-men and Elfgrims, and many were from Thelemark; and all were well armed. Their king, Eystein, was a handsome man, and with a little but good countenance; and he was not of great stature, for his men called him Eystein Meyla. King Magnus and Earl Erling were in Bergen when the Birkebeins sailed past it to the north; but they did not hear of them.

Earl Erling was a man of great understanding and power, an excellent leader in war, and an able and prudent ruler of the country; but he had the character of being cruel and severe. The cause of this was principally that he never allowed his enemies to remain in the country, even when they prayed to him for mercy; and therefore many joined the bands which were collected against him. Erling was a tall strong-made man, somewhat short-necked and high-shouldered; had a long and sharp countenance of a light complexion, and his hair became very grey. He bore his head a little on one side; was free and agreeable in his manners. He wore the old fashion of clothes,—long body-pieces and long arms to his coats, foreign cloak, and high shoes. He made the king wear the same kind of dress in his youth; but when he grew up, and acted for himself, he dressed very sumptuously.

King Magnus was of a light turn of mind, full of jokes; a great lover of mirth, and not less of women.

38.—OF NIKOLAS.

Nikolas was a son of Sigurd Hranason and of Skialdvor, a daughter of Brynjolf Ulfalde, and a sister of Haldor

Brynjolfson by the father's side, and of King Magnus Barefoot by the mother's side. Nikolas was a distinguished chief, who had a farm at Ongul in Halogaland, which was called Steig. Nikolas had also a house in Nidaros, below Saint Jon's church, where Thorgeir the scribe lately dwelt. Nikolas was often in the town, and was president of the townspeople. Skialdvor, Nikolas's daughter, was married to Eirik Arnason, who was also a lenderman.

39.—OF EIRIK AND NIKOLAS.

As the people of the town were coming from matins the last day of Marymas (September 8th), Eirik came up to Nikolas, and said, "Here are some fishermen come from the sea, who report that some long-ships are sailing into the fjord; and people conjecture that these may be the Birkebeins. It would be advisable to call the townspeople together with the war-horns, to meet under arms out on Eyrar."

Nikolas replies, "I don't go after fishermen's reports; but I shall send out spies to the fjord, and in the meantime hold a Thing to-day."

Eirik went home; but when they were ringing to high mass, and Nikolas was going to church, Eirik came to him again, and said, "I believe the news to be true; for here are men who say they saw them under sail: and I think it would be most advisable to ride out of town, and gather men with arms; for it appears to me the townspeople will be too few."

Nikolas replies, "Thou art mixing everything together; let us first hear mass, and then take our resolution."

Nikolas then went into the church. When the mass was over Eirik went to Nikolas, and said, "My horses are saddled; I will ride away."

Nikolas replies, "Farewell, then: we will hold a Thing to-day on the Eyrar, and examine what force of men there may be in the town."

Eirik rode away, and Nikolas went to his house, and then to dinner.

40.—THE FALL OF NIKOLAS.

The meat was scarcely put on the table, when a man came into the house to tell Nikolas that the Birkebeins were rowing up the river. Then Nikolas called to his men to take their weapons. When they were armed Nikolas ordered them to go up into the loft. But that was a most imprudent step; for if they had remained in the yard, the townspeople might have come to their assistance; but now the Birkebeins filled the whole yard, and from thence scrambled from all sides up to the loft. They called to Nikolas, and offered him quarter, but he refused it. Then they attacked the loft. Nikolas and his men defended themselves with bow-shot, hand-shot, and stones of the chimney; but the Birkebeins hewed down the houses, broke up the loft, and returned shot for shot from bow or hand. Nikolas had a red shield in which were gilt nails, and about it was a border of stars. The Birkebeins shot so that the arrows went in up to the arrow feather. Then said Nikolas, "My shield deceives me." Nikolas and a number of his people fell, and his death was greatly lamented. The Birkebeins gave all the towns-people their lives.

41.—EYSTEIN PROCLAIMED KING.

Eystein was then proclaimed king, and all the people submitted to him. He stayed a while in the town, and then went into the interior of the Throndhjem land, where many joined him, and among them Thorfin Svarte of Snos with a troop of people. When the Birkebeins, in the beginning of winter (1177), came again into the town, the sons of Gudrun from Saltnes, Jon Ketling, Sigurd, and William, joined them; and when they proceeded afterwards from Nidaros up Orkadal, they could number nearly 2000 men. They afterwards went to the Uplands, and on to Thoten and Hadaland, and from thence to Ringerike, and subdued the country wheresover they came.

42.—THE FALL OF KING EYSTEIN.

King Magnus went eastward to Viken in autumn with a part of his men and with him Orm, the king's brother; but Earl Erling remained behind in Bergen to meet the Berkebeins in case they took the sea route. King Magnus went to Tunsberg, where he and Orm held their Yule (1177). When King Magnus heard that the Birkebeins were up in Re, the king and Orm proceeded thither with their men. There was much snow, and it was dreadfully cold. When they came to the farm they left the beaten track on the road, and drew up their array outside of the fence, and trod a path through the snow with their men, who were not quite 1500 in number. The Birkebeins were dispersed here and there in other farms, a few men in each house. When they perceived King Magnus's army they assembled, and drew up in regular order; and as they thought

their force was larger than his, which it actually was, they resolved to fight; but when they hurried forward to the road only a few could advance at a time, which broke their array, and the men fell who first advanced upon the beaten way. Then the Birkebeins' banner was cut down; those who were nearest gave way and some took to flight. King Magnus's men pursued them, and killed one after the other as they came up with them. Thus the Birkebeins could never form themselves in array; and being exposed to the weapons of the enemy singly, many of them fell, and many fled. It happened here, as it often does, that although men be brave and gallant, if they have once been defeated and driven to flight, they will not easily be brought to turn round. Now the main body of the Birkebeins began to fly, and many fell; because Magnus's men killed all they could lay hold of, and not one of them got quarter. The whole body became scattered far and wide. Eystein in his flight ran into a house, and begged for his life, and that the bonde would conceal him; but the bonde killed him, and then went to King Magnus, whom he found at Rafnnes, where the king was in a room warming himself by the fire along with many people. Some went for the corpse, and bore it into the room, where the king told the people to come and inspect the body. A man was sitting on a bench in the corner, and he was a Birkebein, but nobody had observed him; and when he saw and recognised his chief's body he sprang up suddenly and actively, rushed out upon the floor, and with an axe he had in his hands made a blow at King Magnus's neck between the shoulders. A man saw the axe swinging, and pulled the

king to a side, by which the axe struck lower in the shoulder, and made a large wound. He then raised the axe again, and made a blow at Orm, the King-brother, who was lying on a bench, and the blow was directed at both legs; but Orm seeing the man about to kill him, drew in his feet instantly, threw them over his head, and the blow fell on the bench, in which the axe stuck fast; and then the blows at the Birkebein came so thick that he could scarcely fall to the ground. It was discovered that he had dragged his entrails after him over the floor; and this man's bravery was highly praised. King Magnus's men followed the fugitives, and killed so many that they were tired of it. Thorfin of Snos, and a very great number of Throndhjem people, fell there.

43.—OF THE BIRKEBEINS.

The faction which called itself the Birkebeins had gathered together in great numbers. They were a hardy people, and the boldest of men under arms; but wild, and going forward madly when they had a strong force. They had few men in their faction who were good counsellors, or accustomed to rule a country by law, or to head an army; and if there were such men among them who had more knowledge, yet the many would only allow of those measures which they liked, trusting always to their numbers and courage. Of the men who escaped many were wounded, and had lost both their clothes and their arms, and were altogether destitute of money. Some went east to the borders, some went all the way east to Svithjod; but the most of them went to Thelemark, where they had

their families. All took flight, as they had no hope of getting their lives from King Magnus or Earl Erling.

44.—OF KING MAGNUS ERLINGSON.

King Magnus then returned to Tunsberg, and got great renown by this victory; for it had been an expression in the mouths of all, that Earl Erling was the shield and support of his son and himself. But after gaining a victory over so strong and numerous a force with fewer troops, King Magnus was considered by all as surpassing other leaders, and that he would become a warrior as much greater than his father, Earl Erling, as he was younger.

END OF THE HEIMSKRINGLA.

INDEX

OF

PERSONS AND PLACES.

THE HEIMSKRINGLA.

A

Aberdeen, 961.
Absalon (Bishop), 1043.
Adalbrekt, 928.
Adalrad, 159.
Adrian, 965.
Afradsol, 4.
Afrafaste, 590.
Agdanes, 53.
Agder, 6, 33, 562.
Agrip, 62.
Akason, 160.
Ake, 29, 158.
Ale Uskeynd, 997.
Alf Askman, 94.
Alfheimar, 9.
Alfhild, 452, 658.
Alfifa, 636.
Alf Hrode, 956.
Alf Rode, 995, 1039.
Alfvine, 153.
Alof, 35, 45, 115.
Allogia, 126.
Alreksstader, 55, 115.
Amunde, 395, 418, 953, 962, 998.
Andreas Brunson, 917.
Andres Kelduskib, 944.
Andres Simonson, 995.
Andres the Deaf, 928.
Anglesey, 830.
Annar, a Dwarf, 71.
An Skyle, 227.
Arbot, 45.
Archbishop Assur, 919.
Archbishop Otto, 793.
Are, 4.
Are Einarson, 950.
Are Frode, 645.
Are Marson, 364.
Are Thorgeirson, 1046.
Are Thorgilson, 567.
Arnbjorn, 573, 951.
Arne, 497, 539, 569, 639.
Arne Brigdarskalle, 1010.
Arne Frirekson, 1004.
Arne of Stodrein, 957.
Arne Sturla, 955, 976.
Arnfid, 135.
Arnfin, 72, 227, 392, 621.
Arnkel, 67, 392.
Arnlot Gellina, 227, 509, 607.
Arnor, 744.
Arnor the Skald, 393, 409, 651, 670.
Arnvid the Blind, 25, 384.
Asa, 6, 32.
Asas, 413, 861.
Asbjorn of Forland, 1014.
Asbjorn Jalda, 998.
Asbjorn Snara, 1043.
Ashbjorn, 82, 115, 613.
Ashbjorn Selsbane, 432, 447.
Asgaut, 305.
Ashild, 35.
Askel, 186.

Aslak, 275, 889, 944.
Aslak Erlingson, 732, 972.
Aslak Fitiaskalle, 430, 469, 560, 623.
Aslak Hakonson, 938.
Aslak Holmskalle, 166.
Aslak Jonson, 976.
Aslakson, 55.
Aslaug, 9.
Asmund, 741, 917.
Asmund Grankelson, 453, 503, 550, 662.
Asolf, 796, 937.
Asolf Skulason, 831.
Asta, 169, 192, 251, 276, 340, 463.
Astrid, 119, 143, 158, 183, 248, 323, 366, 939.
Athelstane, 56, 66, 197, 283, 304, 412, 862.
Atle Mjove, 27, 678.
Atley Island, 27.
Atte, 380.
Audbjorn, 25.
Audunraude, 958.

B

Baldwin (King), 855.
Bard, 491.
Bard Jokulson, 572.
Bard Standale, 1039.
Bard Svarte, 678.
Banda-Drapa, 222.
Banda Lay, 141.
Baugeid, 999.
Battle of Clontarf, 393.
Beintein, 943.
Bendikt, 938.
Berdlukar, 27.
Bergljot, 55, 73, 139, 266, 735, 994.
Bergthor, 176.
Bergthor Bestil, 227.
Berse the Strong, 227.
Berse Torfason, 298, 468.
Biadmynia, 831.
Birger, 156.
Birger Brose, 964, 1048.
Birkebeins, 1051.
Bishop Reinald, 916.
Bishop Sigurd, 209, 421, 442, 610, 635.
Bjadok, 955.
Bjarkamal, 602.
Bjarmaland, 475.
Bjarne the Bad, 1030.
Bjarne Gullbrarskald, 562, 574, 623, 651, 688.
Bjorn, 50, 59, 227, 303, 311, 320, 344, 543, 569, 623.
Bjorn Buk, 957, 996.
Bjorn Egilson, 938.
Bjorn Eiterkveisa, 121.
Bjorn Kaupman, 52.
Bjorn Krephende, 815, 828.
Bjorn Nikolson, 995.
Blatand (Bluetooth), 145.
Blotsvein, 882.
Bodvar, 212, 323.
Bolle Thorlakson, 215.
Bolverk, 692, 716, 723.
Borghild, 875.
Botolf, 82.
Brage, 62.
Brand, 212.
Brennuflose, 212.
Brian, 393.
Brigida, 730, 963, 1048.
Brimilskjar, 184.
Bruse, 393, 403, 564, 688, 950.
Brynjolf Ulfalde, 311, 798, 1050.
Bue the Thick, 158, 165.
Buriz Heinrekson, 1011.
Burizleif, 143, 149, 223, 232.
Buste, 124.

C

Caithness, 392, 575, 960.
Campaign Poem (Togdrapa), 554.
Canute, 159, 265, 270, 281, 391, 409, 451, 465, 502, 521, 549, 569, 610, 656, 776, 807.

Canute Lavard, 869.
Carl's Head (ship), 295.
Catherine, 869.
Cecilia, 901.
Christ, 78, 210, 359, 591.
Christ Church, 867.
Christiana, 869, 957.
Christianity, 76, 200, 304, 334, 367, 413, 448, 798, 856.
Church of the Apostles, 861.
Clement, 950.
Clement's Church, 813.
Constantinople, 692, 855, 1008.
Crane (ship), 202, 241.

D

Dag, 35, 50, 98, 543, 589, 623.
Dag Eilifson, 820, 895, 928, 962.
Dale Gudbrand, 110, 420.
Danavirke, 145.
Dean Ketil, 955.
Denmark, 70, 156, 330, 385, 470, 480, 668, 720.
Devil, 209.
Dixen, 143.
Dotta, 724.
Dovrefield, 20, 286.
Dublin, 51, 153, 174, 393, 746, 843.
Duke of Kipr, 855.
Duke Roger, 854.
Duke Skule, 928.
Dunimiz, 919.

E

Earl Dungad, 392.
Earl Fin, 761.
Earl Godwin, 772.
Earl Gudin, 532.
Earl Gyrd, 794.
Earl Hakon, 139, 146, 160, 169, 176, 190, 218, 249, 269, 451, 470, 541, 569, 732, 763, 840.
Earl Huge, 829.
Earl Mornkare, 532, 782.
Earl Nereid, 227.
Earl Orm, 732.
Earl Ottar, 149.
Earl Robert, 772.
Earl Svein, 429, 532, 772.
Earl Thorfin, 396, 743.
Earl Ulf, 379, 480, 524, 775.
Earl Valthiof, 532, 794.
Earl Walter, 772.
Edgar, 265.
Edla, 366.
Edmund, 266.
Edmund Olafson, 652.
Edmund the Saint, 259, 270.
Edward, 263, 532, 689, 772, 793.
Edevy, 265.
Egersund, 556.
Eggja, 639, 665.
Egil, 367, 464, 534.
Egil Aslakson, 816.
Egil Skallagrimson, 62, 107, 212.
Egil Ulserk, 86.
Egla, 62.
Eid, 9, 29.
Eilif, 312, 379, 692.
Einar, 38, 45, 115, 136, 290, 365, 399, 406, 553, 732, 946.
Einar, Arason, 945.
Einar Paulson, 947.
Einar Rangmund, 393, 406, 413, 429.
Einar Skulason 850, 926, 955.
Einar Tambaskelfer, 227, 244, 266, 287, 292, 429, 451, 579, 638, 672, 721, 733.
Eindride, 115, 236, 552, 732, 944, 987.
Eindride Heidafylja 1030.
Eindride Styrkarson, 266.
Eindride Unge, 958, 1006, 1017.
Eirik, 18, 28, 66, 84, 93, 113, 140, 160, 183, 223, 233, 241, 248, 265, 310, 881, 938.
Eirik Arsole, 882.
Eirik Arnason, 1051.
Eirik Bjodaskalle 119, 184, 323.

Eirik Blood-Ax, 35, 53, 62, 218, 392, 402.
Eirik Eimune, 905.
Eirik Eymundson, 43, 350.
Eirik Hael, 944.
Eirik Odson, 947.
Eirik Sveinson, 837.
Eirik the Red, 218.
Eirik the Victorious, 330, 350.
Ekkjalsbakke, 37.
Eldjarn, 835.
Elfgrims, 821, 1050.
Elizabeth, 708.
Ellisif, 707.
Emma, 265, 772.
Emund of Skara, 379.
England, 66, 150, 270, 391, 480, 575, 668, 774, 793, 807, 961.
Erland Himalde, 731, 1028.
Erlend, 67, 178, 392, 623, 781, 846.
Erling, 61, 117, 127, 169, 186, 308, 430.
Erling of Gerd, 957.
Erling Skakke, 958, 984, 1015, 1024.
Erling Skjalgson, 188, 231, 236, 266, 294, 299, 310, 420, 430, 440, 481, 540, 552, 994.
Ethelred, 159, 259, 270, 772.
Eyin Idre, 21.
Eyjolf Dadaskald, 141.
Eyjolf Valgerdson, 157.
Eyna, 21, 73.
Eyrassund, 70.
Eystein, 6, 16, 24, 73, 391, 643, 731, 819, 849, 862, 877, 955, 1050.
Eystein, Archbishop, 1028, 1035.
Eystein Haraldson, 1004, 1048.
Eystein Magnuson, 1044.
Eystein Orre, 492, 785.
Eystein Trafale, 971.
Eyvind Kelda, 193.
Eyvind Kinrifa, 191, 205.
Eyvind Olboge, 844.
Eyvind Skaldaspillar, 27, 91, 102, 118, 164, 410.
Eyvind Skreyja, 94.
Eyvind Snak, 227.
Eyvind Urarhorn, 314, 365, 397.

F

Fagrskinna, 62, 251.
Farey Isles, 462.
Fenja, 102.
Fenris Wolf, 91.
Fialar, 27.
Fin, 227, 418, 494, 569, 607, 639, 688, 736, 760, 150.
Fin Arnason, 939, 957, 1043.
Finmark (Finland), 48.
Fin Skoptason, 832.
Fin Svase, 39.
Fitjar, 91.
Firdafylke, 25.
Fitjaskalle, 186.
Fjolner, 2.
Flanders, 259, 775.
Floamanna Saga, 62.
Flateyjarbok, 6.
Footbreadth (a sword), 94.
Frankland, 146.
Frederick (Emperor), 855.
Fredarberg, 87.
Frey, 2.
Freyja, 77, 90.
Freyvid the Deaf, 384.
Friesland, 146, 775.
Frig, 102.
Frirek Keina, 1030.
Frode, 3, 17, 35, 51, 102.
Fulla, 102.

G

Gamle, 61, 89.
Gandolf, 6, 16.
Gardarike (Russia), 141.
Gauka-Thorer, 590.
Gaular, 8, 27, 292.
Gaulardel, 20.

Gautland, 28, 70, 149, 230, 366.
Gaut River, 28, 381.
Gaut the Red, 517.
Gaute Tofason, 381.
Geira, 143, 150, 234.
Geirfin, 264.
Geirmund, 161.
Geirstadolf, 1, 35.
Geller, 3, 464, 486, 504, 539.
Germany, 668.
Gibbon, 22.
Gille, 461, 481, 514.
Gillikrist, 891.
Giparde, 834.
Giske, 647.
Gisle Sursson's Saga, 62.
Gissur, 168, 212, 228, 323, 599, 621.
Glelogn Song, 643.
Glommen, 50.
Glum's Saga, 62.
Glum Geirason, 68, 91, 100, 115, 133.
Glymdrapa, 23, 92.
Gold Harald, 128.
Gondul, 98.
Gorm the Old, 11, 18, 128, 392, 468.
Gotland, 146, 222, 256.
Grafeld, 72.
Grankel, 412, 502, 612.
Great Dragon (ship), 976.
Greeks, 1007.
Greenland, 218, 229, 362.
Gregorius, 940, 962, 971, 981, 999.
Gregorius Church, 731.
Grelad, 392.
Grenmar, 28.
Grey Goose, 668.
Grim Rusle, 1044.
Grimkel, 303, 640.
Grimsby, 66.
Grim the Good, 604, 631, 604.
Grim of Vist, 944.
Griotgard, 548, 573.
Griotgard the Brisk, 227.
Griotgardson, 21, 27, 105, 116.
Gryting, 20.
Gudbrand, 7.
Gudbrand Hvite, 164, 192.
Gudbrandsdal, 19.
Gudleik Gerske, 316.
Gudmund (Bishop), 1046.
Gudmund Eyjolfson, 363, 770.
Gudbrand Skafhogson, 863, 1004, 1044.
Gudrid, 716, 951.
Gudrod, 6, 42, 65, 110, 134, 218, 282, 336, 1002.
Gudrod Ljome, 40.
Gudrod Skiria, 35.
Gudrun, 201, 796, 945.
Gulskeg (Goldbeard), 8.
Gunhild, 48, 59, 68, 97, 104, 114, 130, 143, 158, 223, 270, 330, 410, 668, 732, 1001.
Gunnar, 288.
Gunne Fis, 917.
Gunnar of Grimsar, 938.
Gunstein, 454, 472, 500.
Guthorm, 10, 16, 44, 61, 84, 277, 340, 391, 716, 736, 745, 796.
Guthorm Grabarde, 907, 966.
Guthorm Sindre, 54, 67, 84.
Gyda, 18, 133, 152, 223, 532, 772.
Gyrd, 779, 944, 953, 981.
Gyrger, 694.
Gyrid, 983, 998.

H

Hadeland, 10, 335, 1053.
Had the Hard, 33.
Hafersfjord, 33.
Hake, 9, 16.
Hakon, 2, 58, 62, 69, 75, 121, 127, 265, 292, 304, 330.
Hakon Armal, 62, 98.
Hakon Fauk, 875, 915.
Hakon the Good, 55, 79, 89, 97.
Hakon Ivarson, 731, 739, 754, 1043.
Hakon Mage, 944, 953.
Hakon Magnuson, 815.
Hakon the Old, 124.

Hakon Pungelta, 944.
Hakon Serkson, 883.
Hakon Sigurdson, 107.
Hal, 4, 202, 770.
Haldor, 177, 199, 212, 233, 242, 481, 700, 798, 965.
Haldor Brynjolfson, 995, 1050.
Haldor Gudmundson, 228.
Haldor Sigurdson, 938.
Haldor Skvaldre, 851.
Haldor Snorrason, 730.
Haleygjatal, 2, 107, 164.
Halfred's Saga, 62, 216, 239, 248.
Halfdan, 1, 6, 16, 29, 51, 59, 73, 101, 192, 277, 340.
Halfdan Haleg, 40, 51, 391.
Halfred Vandrede, 144, 216.
Halkel, 227, 891, 964, 977.
Hallad, 38.
Halland, 815.
Hallarstein, 142.
Halogaland, 48, 85, 161, 203, 219, 413, 497.
Hal Stein, 227.
Hal Steinson, 953.
Halvard Church, 905.
Halvard Faeger, 950.
Halvard Gunnarson, 971.
Halvard Hareksblese, 555.
Halvard Hauld, 980.
Harald, 2, 77, 330, 340, 532, 574, 668, 908.
Harald Eirikson, 72.
Harald Fletter, 815.
Harald Gille, 892, 906, 917, 953, 1009.
Harald Godwinson, 773, 784.
Harald Gormson, 71, 85, 127, 141, 155, 226, 330.
Harald Grafeld, 100, 108, 116, 131, 465.
Harald Grenske, 112, 134, 169, 192, 251.
Harald Hardrade, 691, 717, 729, 743, 767.
Harald Harfagar, 1, 8, 16, 33, 53, 60, 87, 101, 172, 182, 190, 277, 330, 391, 402, 612, 806.
Harald Hein, 804.
Harald Kesia, 942.
Harald Maddad, 960.
Harald Sigurdson, 409, 587, 626, 651, 709, 723, 785.
Harald Valdemarson, 869.
Hardaknut, 128, 270, 480, 524, 657, 777.
Hardanger, 115, 132.
Harek, 67, 191, 203, 410, 453, 503, 537, 550, 579, 612, 623, 662.
Harek Gaud, 10.
Hartlepool, 961.
Hauk, 57, 203, 227.
Haukadal, 4.
Haukfliot, 66.
Havard, 392.
Havard Hoggande, 166.
Havard Klining, 994.
Headranson, 554.
Hebrides, 33, 66, 150, 958.
Hedemark, 6, 249, 282, 335, 427.
Hedin Hirdmage, 946.
Heimdal, 103.
Hel (death), 677.
Helga, 917.
Helge Hvasse, 9.
Helsingjaland, 9, 34, 74, 114.
Heming, 139, 158.
Henrik Halte, 1004.
Henry, 850.
Henry of Germany, 668.
Henry Strion, 270.
Herlaug, 22.
Hermod, 98.
Herse Arinbjorn, 132.
Herse Gudbrand, 17.
Herse Klyp, 115, 185.
Hild, 39, 602.
Hildebrand, 10.
Hjalte Skeggjason, 308, 319, 327, 365.
Hjalte, 212, 228, 326, 344.
Hjaltland, 35.
Hjort, 9.
Hlader, 73, 190.
Hlodver, 47, 135, 175, 392.

Hneiter, Olaf's sword, 606, 685, 1005.
Hogne Karuson, 16.
Holmfrid, 249.
Hordakare, 186.
Hordaland, 18, 185, 352, 666.
Hoskuld, 211.
Hofgardaref, 599.
Holm-gang, 154.
Hordaland, 18, 69, 98, 139, 186.
Horn Klofe, 23, 33.
Hrane, 28, 172, 253, 271.
Hreidar, 115, 950.
Hring Dagson, 34, 50, 544, 589.
Hroald Hryg, 33, 47, 1022.
Hroe, 315.
Hrollaug, 22, 38.
Hrorek, 35, 282, 335, 352, 359.
Hrut, 603, 665.
Hryggjarstykke, 953.
Humber, 782.
Hunthiof, 23.
Hvelp, 175.
Hyrning, 184, 219, 231, 245.
Hysing, 9.

I

Iceland, 155, 202, 305, 363, 464, 729, 863.
Inge (King), 796, 837, 869, 907, 938, 962, 975, 1022.
Ingebjorg, 160, 231, 318, 322, 379, 410, 688, 816, 863, 1011.
Ingebjork, 229.
Ingegerd, 35, 184, 329, 344, 365, 378, 570, 724, 795, 964.
Ingemar Sveinson, 910.
Ingerid, 184, 277, 796, 804, 1011.
Ireland, 66, 154, 393, 893.
Isleif, 4.
Isrid, 464.
Ivar, 37, 67, 731.
Ivar Assurson, 916.
Ivar Dynta, 951.
Ivar Elda, 994.
Ivar Ingemundson, 863.
Ivar Kolbeinson, 934.
Ivar Skrauthanke, 950.
Ivar Smetta, 228.
Ivar Sneis, 957.
Ivar White, 533.

J

Jacob, 366, 388.
Jadar, 33.
Jarisleif, 374, 570, 650, 692.
Jarnskegge (son of Beard), 115, 197.
Jatmund, 67.
Jemtaland, 34, 74, 114, 488.
Jerusalem, 264, 580, 703, 855, 958.
Joan, 662, 730.
Jokul Bardson, 572.
Jomala (an idol), 475.
Jomsborg, 158, 234, 283, 636, 674.
Jon, 817, 917.
Jon of Austrat, 928.
Jon Halkelson, 964, 1009.
Jon Kauda, 946.
Jon Ketling, 1053.
Jon Kutiza, 1011.
Jon Loftson, 1033.
Jon Smiorbalte, 891.
Jon Smyril, 946.
Jon Tapbard, 969.
Jon Thorbergson, 1044.
Jordan, 703, 856.
Jorum, 54, 730, 770.
Jostein, 184, 228.
Jove, 554.
Jutland, 35, 147, 525, 675, 720.

K

Kalf Arnason, 418, 494, 545, 562, 579, 612, 623, 646, 663, 743.
Kalf Kringluange, 946.
Kalf Range, 946.
Kalf Skurfa, 43.
Kar, 81, 199.
Kark, 177.
Karle, 454, 472, 513, 758.

Karlshofud, 184.
Karl Sonason, 939, 963.
Karl Sorkver, 869.
Karl Sorkvison, 869.
Karmtsund, 60.
Ketil, 227, 293, 301, 338, 463, 732.
Ketilbjornson, 217.
Ketil Jamte, 74, 488.
Ketil Kalf, 745.
Ketil Krok, 795.
Kimbe, 627.
Kirjalax (Emperor), 855, 1005.
Kisping, 96.
Kjartan Olafson, 211, 228.
Kjotve, 33.
Klakharald, 11.
Kleng Brusason, 293.
Klerkon, 124.
Knut the Great, 159.
Knut Gormson, 116.
Knut Lavard, 908.
Knut Sveinson, 895.
Kodran, 770.
Kolbein, 212, 425, 897, 943, 951.
Kolbein Hruge, 955.
Kolbein Ode, 983.
Kolbein Thordson, 228.
Kolbjorn, 227, 246, 418.
Kolbjorn Klakke, 820.
Kolle, 938.
Kolson, 4.
Konofogor (Connor), 365.
Konungahella, 366, 480, 767, 926, 981.
Kormak Agmundson, 78, 100.
Kormak's Saga, 62.
Kormt, 55.
Kristin, 1000, 1042.
Kristod, 910.
Krokaskog, 939.
Kyrpingaorm, 955.

L

Lagman, 828.
Landnamabok, 62.
Landravager (a banner), 791.
Lange, 227.
Laxdaela, 62.
Leif Eirikson, 218, 229, 362.
Leif Ossurson, 461, 481, 514.
Lisbon, 851.
Little Fin, 354
Ljot, 135.
Lodbrok, 66.
Lodin, 183, 288.
Lodin Saupprud, 950.
Lodin Viggiarskalle, 816.
Logberse, 936.
Loke, 91.
London, 259, 749.
Long Serpent (a ship), 226, 239, 751, 976.
Lopt, 917.
Lygra Orm, 199.

M

Maelar, 255.
Maerin, 198.
Magnus, 451, 569, 584, 650, 761, 777, 795, 818, 905.
Magnus Barefoot, 801, 880, 931, 942, 1009, 1033, 1051.
Magnus the Blind, 906, 937.
Magnus Einarson, 927.
Magnus Erlingson, 1011, 1056.
Magnus Olafson, 651, 668, 704, 717, 731, 768.
Magnus Sigurdson, 909.
Magnus the Strong, 881.
Malcolm, 393.
Malmfrid, 869, 1011.
Manual (Emperor), 855.
Margad (King), 746.
Markus of Skog, 1021.
Margaret, 837, 855, 869, 957.
Margaret's Church, 802.
Maria, 704, 724, 785.
Marsey, 147.
Mary Church, 731, 796, 838.
Melbridge Tooth, 37.
Melkolm (Malcolm), 830.
Menja, 102.

Mercurius, 259.
Michael's Church, 861.
Milkillate, 2.
Mjove (Earl), 8.
More, 27.
Munan Ogmundson, 939.
Myrkjartan, 831, 843.

N

Narfe, 82.
Naumadal (district), 21, 410.
Nefjulfson, 212.
Nefstein, 796.
Nereid, 911.
Nesjar, 296.
Nid, 201.
Nidaros, 4, 197, 212, 225, 293, 410, 640, 779, 1020.
Nikolas (King), 861, 881.
Nikolas Arne, 957.
Nikolas Church, 861.
Nikolas Kufung, 1047.
Nikolas Mase, 963, 1004.
Nikolas Sigurdson, 1029.
Nikolas Skeg, 994.
Nikolas Skialdvarson, 987, 1009.
Niord, 77.
Nis-River, 755.
Nokve, 24.
Nokve Palson, 1029.
Normandy, 772, 793.
Northumberland, 150.
Norway, 69, 249, 272, 307, 331, 368, 470, 570, 721, 777, 905.
Novgorod, 317, 377, 650.

O

Od, 4, 90, 720.
Od Kikinaskald, 651, 687.
Odin, 23, 62, 77, 98, 136, 148, 195.
Ogmond Thorbergson, 816.
Ogmund, 186, 227, 831, 939, 962.
Ogmund Svipte, 948, 962.
Ogvald, 195.
Ogvaldsnes, 83, 195.
Olaf, 50, 60, 224, 295, 318, 326, 366, 671.
Olaf's Church, 749.
Olaf of Dal, 875.
Olaf Dreng, 227.
Olaf Eirikson, 366.
Olaf Haraldson, 192, 271, 282, 308, 320, 336, 351, 359, 391, 458, 466, 492.
Olaf Klining, 1002.
Olaf Kvaran, 153.
Olaf Kyree, 801.
Olafmas, 748.
Olaf the Saint, 4, 251, 409, 644, 676, 731, 747, 805, 867, 965, 1006.
Olaf the Swede, 113, 307, 318, 349, 391, 428.
Olaf Styrbjorn, 44.
Olaf the Thick, 301, 317, 328, 344, 368, 383, 465, 577.
Olaf the Unlucky, 1047.
Olafson, 110.
Olaf Trygvason, 119, 141, 145, 151, 178, 187, 214, 233, 242, 265, 282, 310, 318, 392, 402, 521, 536, 581, 648, 881.
Olver Spake, 9.
Olmod, 186.
Olver of Egga, 413, 545, 573.
Olver Miklimum, 921.
Onund, 74, 389, 470, 480, 521, 584, 1014.
Onund Simonson, 10, 13, 1030.
Opal, 23.
Orkadal, 19, 286, 308.
Orkneys, 35, 65, 305, 391, 404, 688, 795.
Orm, Eilifson, 939, 957.
Orm Lyrgja, 176.
Orm Skogarnef, 228.
Orm Sneis, 957, 1001.
Ornolf Skorpa, 1030.
Oslo, 765, 906, 940, 1000.
Otta Svein, 149.
Ottar Balle, 937.
Ottar Birting, 885, 937, 948, 962.

Ottarson, 212.
Ottar Svarte, 253, 262, 325, 408, 428, 529.
Otto, 144, 675.
Ozar Agason, 224.
Ozur Tote, 48.

P

Padreim, 859.
Pal Andreason, 1039.
Pal Skaptason, 1047.
Paul, 781, 828.
Paul's Church, 775.
Paul Flip, 917.
Peter the Apostle, 902.
Peter Byrda-Svein, 731, 949.
Philip, 922, 957, 975, 1014.
Poppo (Bishop), 148.

Q

Queen Astrid, 543, 569, 588, 652.
Queen Ellisif, 724, 781, 795.
Queen Emma, 524, 668.
Queen Gyda, 647, 869.
Queen Ingerid, 934, 957.
Queen Malmfrid, 957.
Queen Margaret, 881.
Queen Ragnhild, 39.
Queen Sigrid, 671.
Quernbite (a sword) 58, 93.

R

Ragna, 957, 1004.
Ragnar, 50.
Ragnar Lodbrok, 9, 28, 128.
Ragnar Rykkil, 35.
Ragnfrod, 61, 136.
Ragnhild, 8, 13, 35, 61, 732, 880, 942.
Ragnvald, 1, 24, 164, 266, 318, 344, 366, 408, 492, 543, 569, 688.
Ragnvald Kunta, 1014.
Ragnvald Rettilbeine, 40, 193, 230, 318.
Ranrike, 65.
Ranveig, 662.
Rasvol, 730.
Raud, 14, 207, 543.
Raumarike, 6, 17, 50, 141, 160, 249, 282, 334, 428, 765.
Raumsdal, 24, 50, 76, 107, 190, 1020.
Razabard, 1039.
Reas, 125.
Rekon, 125.
Rettibur, 919.
Richard, 265, 772, 966.
Ring, 282, 335.
Ringerike, 9, 17, 28, 50, 1053.
Ringsaker, 17.
Robert, 265, 772.
Robert Longspear, 39.
Roeskilde, 532, 671.
Rogaland, 52, 60, 69, 186.
Roger the Great, 855.
Rolf Ganger, 38, 265.
Rolf Nefia, 38.
Rouen, 265.
Russia, 151, 317, 374, 569.
Rykinsvik, 14.

S

Sacrifices, 77.
Sadagyrd Bardson, 936, 948, 962.
Saemund Husfreyja, 917.
Satan, 1022.
Sauda Ulf, 730, 949.
Saur (a dog King), 438.
Saxe of Vik, 838, 928.
Saxland, 146.
Saxo, 62.
Scarborough, 781.
Scat, 19, 756.
Scotland, 66, 391, 469, 820, 961.
Sealand, 70.
Serk of Sogn, 843.
Sida, 4.

Sidon, 856.
Short Serpent (a ship), 211, 239.
Sigfrod, 32.
Sigmund, 62.
Sigrid, 113, 169, 191, 455, 732, 928.
Sigrid the Hauty, 223, 230.
Sigrid Saeta, 972.
Sigrod, 50, 59.
Sigtryg, 6, 35, 50, 393, 570.
Sigtuna, 254.
Sigurd, 9, 56, 77, 104, 158, 204, 276, 282, 391, 402, 482, 544, 816, 847.
Sigurd Agnhot, 1044.
Sigurd Bergthorsen, 950.
Sigurd Bild, 227.
Sigurd Eirikson, 124.
Sigurd Gyrdson, 922.
Sigurd Haraldson, 1047.
Sigurd Hit, 356.
Sigurd Hiupa, 1014.
Sigurd Hjort, 9.
Sigurd Hranason, 843, 869, 1050.
Sigurd Hring, 28.
Sigurd Hrise, 40, 192.
Sigurd Kapa, 1020.
Sigurd Mun, 1021.
Sigurd Orm, 128.
Sigurd of Reyr, 981, 994, 1012.
Sigurd Slembe, 931, 944.
Sigurd Slembidjakn, 928, 946.
Sigurd Sigurdson, 4, 895, 911.
Sigurd Skrudhyrna, 971.
Sigurd Slefa, 61, 114, 186.
Sigurd Stork, 944, 1011.
Sigurd Syr, 192, 252, 275, 286, 293, 691, 796.
Sigurd the Crusader, 905, 1010.
Sigurd the Thick, 392.
Sigurd Thoreson, 432.
Sigurd Ulstreng, 816, 857, 877, 950.
Sigvalde, 158, 163, 224, 234, 241, 258, 291.
Sigvat the Skald, 256, 267, 291, 297, 326, 357, 371, 468, 522, 539.
Simon Karason, 957.
Simon Skalp, 964, 979, 1004, 1017.
Simon Thorbergson, 959.
Skage Skoptason, 139.
Skaldaspillar, 2.
Skane, 70.
Skapte Thoraldson, 305, 363, 460.
Skarde, 167.
Skaun, 21, 286.
Skegge, 197.
Skeggjason, 228.
Skialdvar, 871, 1050.
Skjalg, 430, 440, 816.
Skoglar Toste, 169, 223, 671.
Skogul, 98.
Skolk, 7.
Skopte, 140, 816.
Skopte Ogmundson, 796, 831.
Skrattasker, 195.
Skule, 135, 795.
Skule Thornsteinson, 241.
Snaefrid, 40.
Snorre, 5, 62, 460, 700, 801.
Sogn, 8, 27, 50, 69, 139.
Solskel, 24.
Solve, 24.
Solveig, 917.
Sorkver, 964.
Sote, 33, 254.
Southwark, 259.
Spain, 851.
Sparbyggja district, 21.
St. Clement's Church, 722.
Stad, 33.
Standale Brynjolfson, 976.
Stare, 951.
Stein, 464, 486.
Stein Herdison, 731, 755, 799.
Steinkel (King), 764, 832.
Stephanus, 1033.
Stig Hvitaled, 869.
Stjoradal, 21.
Stiklestad, 618, 636, 650, 691, 797.
Stradbjarne, 1014.
Strind district, 21.
Strutharald, 158.
Stuf, the Skald, 703, 724, 803.
Styrbjorn, 330.

Styrkar, 115, 164, 199, 792.
Styrkar Glaesirofa, 946.
Sulke, 33.
Sumarlide, 393.
Svase, 40.
Svein, 157, 182, 233, 241, 249, 289, 298, 465, 526, 567, 816.
Svein Alfifason, 636, 654.
Svein Bergthor Buk, 1002.
Svein Bryggfot, 820.
Svein Eirikson, 869.
Svein Forked Beard, 258, 265, 292, 336, 353, 671, 1012.
Svein Hakonson, 733, 757, 775.
Sveinke Steinarson, 820.
Svein Rimhildson, 895.
Svein Sveinson, 1004.
Svein Tjuguskeg, 223, 233.
Svein Ulfson, 671, 687, 708, 717, 804, 869, 881.
Sverre (King), 979, 1020.
Sverting Runolfson, 228.
Svinagrim, 946.
Svinasund, 28, 50.
Svithjod, 75, 112, 221, 233, 301, 302, 342, 364, 377, 470, 570, 588, 650, 1004.
Sweden, 75, 223, 307, 526.
Syria, 856.

T

Telemark, 33, 50, 1055.
Thangbrand, 4, 202.
Thialfe, 831.
Thiodolf Hvein, 41, 52.
Thiodolf the Skald, 669, 687, 705, 756.
Thiostolf Alason, 909, 936.
Thor, 81, 136, 200, 421.
Thora, 55, 139, 177, 418, 724, 831, 934, 959.
Thoraismson, 4.
Thoralde, 416.
Thorald Kept, 946.
Thoralf, 481.
Thoralf Dryl, 1029.
Thoralf Skolmson, 94, 126, 461.
Thorarin Loftunga, 553, 643.
Thorarin Nefiulfson, 361, 441, 457.
Thorarin Skeggjason, 705.
Thorberg, 82, 418, 831.
Thorberg Arnason, 491, 564, 639, 724, 785.
Thorbergson, 199.
Thorbjorn Gjaldkere, 1029.
Thorbjorn Skakkaskald, 1009.
Thord Barkarson, 457, 482.
Thord Folason, 351, 831.
Thord Geller, 157.
Thord Guthormson, 463.
Thord Husfreyja, 973.
Thord Istermage, 425.
Thordis Skeggia, 1002.
Thord Kolbeinson, 160, 221, 245, 269, 457.
Thord Siarekson, 529.
Thord Sigvaldaskald, 291.
Thord Sjarekson, 62, 97.
Thorer Faxe, 74.
Thorer Gudbrandson, 287.
Thorer Helsing, 75, 488, 547, 1007.
Thorer Hjort, 164, 191, 207.
Thorer Hrvaldson, 39.
Thorer Hund, 412, 456, 472, 540, 579, 615, 662.
Thorer Hvinantorde, 942.
Thorer Ingeribson, 911.
Thorer Klakka, 173.
Thorer Lange, 313.
Thorer Sel, 434, 568.
Thorer Skeg, 82.
Thorer Steig, 716, 722, 813, 863.
Thorer Treskeg, 43.
Thorfin Eisle, 227, 688.
Thorfin Hausakljufer, 68, 392.
Thorfin Sigurdson, 409, 688.
Thorfin of Snos, 1055.
Thorfin Svarte, 1053.
Thorgaut Skarde, 305, 317.
Thorgeir, 4, 184, 219, 231, 490, 620, 953, 1051.
Thorgeir Flek, 593, 663.

Thorgeir Havarson, 457.
Thorgils, 3, 120, 364, 604, 631, 930.
Thorgils Halmason, 604.
Thorgils Sprakaleg, 480, 671.
Thorgny, 343, 370.
Thorgrim Skinhufa, 845.
Thorgrim Thjodolfeon, 227.
Thorgunna, 158.
Thor Haklaug, 33.
Thorkel, 158, 258, 291, 395, 405, 594, 678, 794, 929.
Thorkel Amundason, 406.
Thorkel Dydril, 184, 228, 338.
Thorkel Eyjolfson, 457.
Thorkel Fostre, 932.
Thorkel Geysa, 723.
Thorkel Hamarskald, 816.
Thorkel Leira, 160.
Thorkel Nefia, 184, 228, 238, 247.
Thorlak, 482.
Thorleif, 12.
Thorleif Bollson, 457.
Thorleif Raudfeldson, 181.
Thorleif Skiappa, 944.
Thorleif Spake, 186.
Thorleif the Wise, 40, 109, 140.
Thorleik the Fair, 725.
Thorliot, 981.
Thormod Eindridson, 770.
Thormod Kalbrunar, 457, 599.
Thormod Kalbrunarskald, 601, 627.
Thorny, 11.
Thorod Gode, 157, 464.
Thorod Snorrason, 486, 504.
Thorolf Lusarskey, 120.
Thorstein, 121, 390, 418, 460, 615, 622.
Thorstein Hlifarson, 227.
Thorstein Midlang, 166.
Thorstein Uxafot, 227.
Thorstein the White, 227.
Thorvid the Stammerer, 384, 768.
Thorvald Veile, 202.
Thrand, 482, 514.
Thrand Gialdkare, 951.
Thrand Hak, 82.
Thrand Skjalge, 227.
Thrand the Strong, 227.
Thrand White, 315, 505.
Throndhjem, 4, 21, 27, 55, 65, 76, 104, 136, 160, 173, 288, 303, 390, 413, 574, 615, 645.
Thrye Daunebrod, 11, 65.
Thurid, 4, 867, 936, 1053.
Thyre, 158, 224, 229.
Tidindasskopte, 141.
Tind Halkelson, 164.
Tjalte, 320.
Tjuguskeg (Forked Beard), 157.
Tofe, 534.
Torfeinar, 42, 67, 391.
Toste, 112, 532, 772, 790.
Trygvason, 4.
Trygve, 59, 83, 173, 318.
Tunsburg, 28, 390, 549, 907, 1040, 1053.

U

Ubbe, 29.
Ulf, 230, 239, 267, 671, 706, 778.
Ulf Fly, 731.
Ulfhedin Saxolfson, 942.
Ulfhild, 569, 588, 675.
Ulf Hranason, 846.
Ulfkel Snilling, 261, 270.
Ulfson, 267.
Ulf Uspakson, 730.
Ulle, 178.
Ulserk, 89.
Ulster, 843.
Unibur, 919.
Upsala, 2, 329, 342, 380.
Uplands, 334, 360, 413, 543, 717, 765, 876, 1053.
Urguthrjot, 184.
Usvifer, 700.
Uthyrmer, 227.

V

Vagn, 165.
Valdemar, 125, 142, 173, 379, 869, 908, 1011, 1040.

Valdres, 18.
Valgerd, 770.
Valgaut, 535.
Valhal, 62, 98.
Vanrad, 758.
Vandredaskalde, 213.
Vapnafjord, 156.
Varin, 196.
Varings, 694, 1005.
Vatnorn Dagson, 940.
Vellekla, 107, 136, 147.
Veradal, 21.
Vermaland, 28, 342, 380, 569.
Vermund, 26, 115.
Vesete, 159.
Vestfold, 6, 16, 28, 50, 59, 169, 275.
Veterlide, 203.
Vidar, 121.
Vidkun Jonson, 817, 843, 945.
Viga Glum's Saga, 62.
Vigfusson, 62, 165.
Vige (King Olaf's dog), 154.
Vigleik, 563.
Vikar, 227.
Vikarsskeid, 157.
Viken, 28, 61, 184, 315, 371, 908.
Vikingakare, 323.
Vilborg, 212, 323.
Vindish race, 328.
Vindland, 70, 146, 158, 222.
Vinland, 364.
Vinland the Good, 229.
Vingulmark, 6, 17, 28, 50, 65, 141, 334.
Vissavald, 171, 379.
Vitgeir (a wizzard), 51.

W

Wales, 830.
Warlocks, 156.
Whelp, 393.
Whitby, 961.
William (the Conqueror) the Bastard, 39, 772, 794, 850.
William Longspear, 265.
William Skinnare, 946.

Y

Ynglingatal, 1.
Yngve, 98.
Yngvefrey, 2.
Yrjar, 164, 202.
Yule feast, 13.

Z

Zoe, 704.

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